



















2D. PARISH CHURCH, PORTLAND.

OUR PASTOR;

OR

REMINISCENCES

OF

REV. EDWARD PAYSON, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

IN PORTLAND, ME.

By one of his Flock.

Weston, Isaac



And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever. Dan. xii. 3.

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# DEDICATION.

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TO THE

Rev. J. J. Carruthers, D. D.

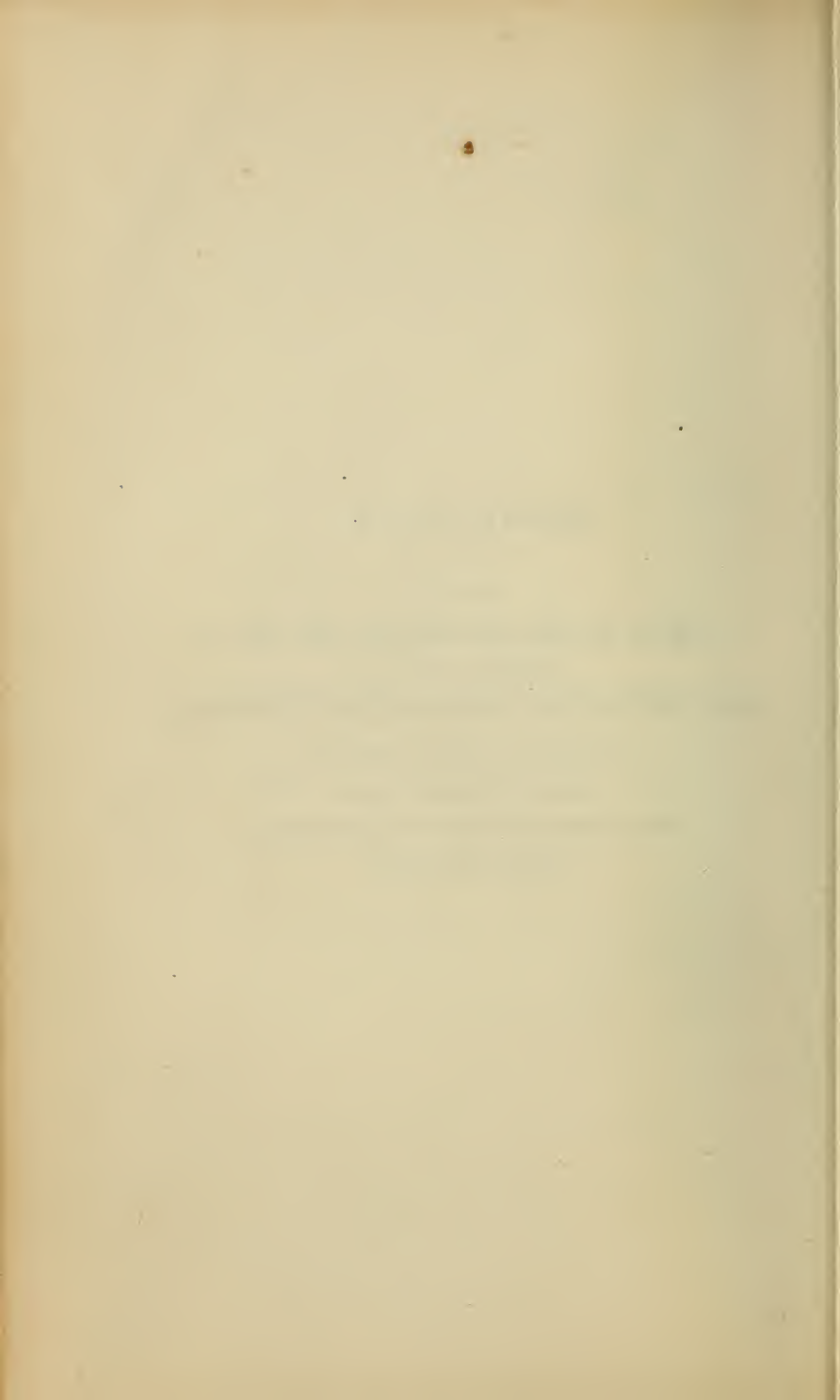
AND TO THE

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN PORTLAND,

NOW UNDER HIS CARE, AND ESPECIALLY  
TO THE SURVIVING MEMBERS OF DR. PAYSON'S CHURCH,  
WHEREVER SCATTERED ABROAD

*This Volume is affectionately inscribed,*

BY THE COMPILER.



## P R E F A C E.

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In presenting to the public the following pages, there is no attempt made to supersede the most excellent "Memoir of Payson," by Rev. Dr. Cummings, published some twenty-five years since.

Our object has been to collect facts and incidents in his life, but few of which have been before published, and from the personal observation, which a long and intimate acquaintance afforded us, to give sketches of his character as a man of God, a Pastor, and Preacher, whereby his character in these respects, shall be more fully illustrated.

It was judged, also, that the example of eminent piety and devotedness to his work, presented in the life of Dr. Payson, might be brought afresh to the notice of the Christian Church, by the publication of these reminiscences — might waken anew the zeal, and encourage the hearts of ministers and private christians.

In the Memoir referred to, ably executed as it is, we have the portrait of Dr. Payson's mind and experience, in the drawing of which, his own hand is more specially employed. Much of it is a picture of himself, as viewed by himself, and therefore affords only a partial and consequently an imperfect delineation of his character. The opinions which *his people* entertained of him, as a be-

loved Pastor, and as one extraordinarily endowed, both by nature and grace, seemed a desideratum, which this volume is intended to supply.

From several clergymen and laymen, who once sat under his ministry, kind testimonials have been received, respecting Dr. Payson's character, and in favor of our work. These letters have been inserted in the following pages, over the initials of the authors' names.

It is but justice for the compiler to remark, that in prosecuting his work, the peculiarity of its style, rendered unavoidable the more frequent introduction of the *first person*, than his modesty would otherwise have allowed.



# CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
Introduction.	5

## CHAPTER I.

Portland in 1803 — Mr. Payson's introduction there in the same year — Anecdotes of Mr. Payson — His Fourth of July oration.	9
---	---

## CHAPTER II.

His first coming to Portland as a preacher, and the moral condition of his field of labor — The Payson fever, so called — Anecdote of Mr. N. C. — Evangelical religion revived — Mr. Payson's ordination — Rev. Mr. Keliogg's dismissal — Some remarks on the occurrence, and upon Mr. K.'s character.	16
--	----

## CHAPTER III.

The sources of Dr. Payson's popularity considered — The character of his preaching — His appearance in the pulpit — Anecdote of the Indians — The high estimation in which he was held by his people — Invariably the same with strangers — Opposition awakened by his preaching — An anecdote — The effect which his preaching produced upon the minds of his audience did not leave them when they retired from the sanctuary.	33
--	----

## CHAPTER IV.

- His prayers — His views of the importance of prayer —  
 The effect of his prayers upon himself, and upon the congregation — His prayer at the funeral of the commanders of the Enterprize and Boxer — His confessions of sin and unworthiness — Not the effect of nervousness or insanity. 43

## CHAPTER V.

- His manner of reading the psalm or hymn — The effect produced upon his hearers, described — General remarks upon the importance of this part of divine service, as a means of grace — Description of a scene in Rev. Dr. Spencer's conference room, by way of illustration. 56

## CHAPTER VI.

- His effectiveness as a preacher. 68  
 His respect for the ministerial office — His respect for his people — His self-respect — Reference to contemporary preachers. (See the following chapter.)

## CHAPTER VII.

- Dr. Payson's mental powers described — Literary habits — His popularity as a preacher sometimes disputed — Defense — The cordial reception he met with during his journeys — The opinions of judicious men with regard to his talents — In what his intellectual pre-eminence consisted — The extraordinary influence accompanying his religious performances. 71

## CHAPTER VIII.

- His sermons considered comparatively — Notice of Rev. Mr. Jenkins — Anecdote of two sailors — Scottish housewife — The superior excellence of Dr. Payson's published sermons called in question by some — "His Thoughts" reviewed — The "Pastor's Daughter." 90

## CHAPTER IX.

- His sensitiveness with regard to the success of his labors —  
His acute mental sufferings — Advantages of spiritual trials  
considered — Dr. Payson not of all men most miserable —  
The peculiarity of his piety described and defended. 104

## CHAPTER X.

- His weekly meetings for Inquirers — Church Fasts — Con-  
ference and prayer meetings — Incidents communicated by  
a correspondent — Communion seasons. 132

## CHAPTER XI.

- Other special qualifications of Dr. Payson, as a pastor — His  
eminence as a spiritual anatomist — His tenderness towards  
the weak of his flock — An instance in point — Yet very  
faithful in giving rebuke when needed — Examples — His  
freedom from eccentricity — his hatred to it when seen in  
others — Anecdote. 144

## CHAPTER XII.

- His conversational powers — His prolific mental resources —  
Dr. Cheever's remarks — He sought no monopoly in the  
social circle — The strong attachment of his people not  
lessened by time nor circumstances. 151

## CHAPTER XIII.

- Would Dr. Payson have sustained his eminence in the minis-  
try had he been continued to the present day? — Was his  
influence not only salutary but enduring? — Would he have  
been a suitable minister for the times? — He was remarka-  
bly free from any signs of mental imbecility — His influence  
powerful and salutary among his people during his life —  
And afterwards, as appears from the general religious char-  
acter of those who survive him — He had a living, praying  
church — His church early brought into the harness. 161

## CHAPTER XIV.

- The faculty of attention and observation remarkably developed in Dr. P. — Remarks on the great advantages to a minister of possessing a habit of observation and a knowledge of common things — Illustrated by the examples of Bunyan, Newton and Scott. 185

## CHAPTER XV.

- The compiler's visit to Rindge, N. H. — The place described — Anecdotes respecting Dr. Payson's childhood, furnished by several individuals. 200

## CHAPTER XVI.

- Dr. Payson in person — Personal habits — His portraits generally imperfect likenesses — Dr. Payson's solemnity of countenance misconstrued — He was not morose or forbidding — His views of God's purposes with regard to his bodily infirmities — His tender and sympathetic feelings. 210

## CHAPTER XVII.

- His condescension and humility — Illustrated by several examples — His aversion to flattery — Remarkably free from ostentation, flippancy or superciliousness — Remarks on the folly and danger of such a spirit in ministers — Peaceable in spirit, yet able to meet an antagonist when occasion called — Illustrated by an instance during a visit to Saratoga Springs. 230

## CHAPTER XVIII.

- It is not known that he had any musical talent — An anecdote — He was not a fastidious or hypercritical hearer — His kind feelings towards young ministers — An illustration — His appreciation of talent — Several anecdotes

- furnished by a minister once a member of his church —  
 His impatience at mental dullness — Our feelings of veneration towards him while in his presence. 242

## CHAPTER XIX.

- His view of church discipline — Some remarks on the same subject. 249

## CHAPTER XX.

- His concentration of mind and unity of purpose — Carefulness to avoid whatever might hinder his usefulness — Great utility of his pastoral visits — The happy disappointment. 253

## CHAPTER XXI.

- His voyage to Charleston, S. C. in 1817. 261

## CHAPTER XXII.

- His conversation always in keeping with occasions — A marriage ceremony — His prudence and propriety of speech and behavior — His remarks on hearing his sister's death announced. 267

## CHAPTER XXIII.

- The different methods he adopted to advance the spiritual interests of his flock — His visits to the house of mourning — Happy results of one, related by a correspondent — Reference to his devotional habits in his family — The congregation once called to arise — The scene described — Results in a revival — Interesting scene at a prayer meeting of the young men of his church — The "Young Men's Society" described. 270

## CHAPTER XXIV.

- Charge of idolatry in Dr. Payson's people considered — His



uncommon piety and talents, combined, constituted the basis of his extraordinary eminence — The warm admiration for him universal among his people — No room for jealousy or envy on the part of his successors — Our opinion of Dr. P. unchanged after a lapse of twenty years — A lady's visit to him during his last sickness — Lines composed by her, after her return home.

281

## CHAPTER XXV.

Character of his Theology — Anecdote respecting the Exercise and Taste scheme — His Calvinism once challenged — Was his preaching of a sufficiently doctrinal character? — Free from all innovations in his theology — Beautiful harmony between his preaching and practice — His strong confidence in God, illustrated.

292

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Difference in religious opinions, less a hindrance to ministerial exchanges now, than formerly—A word respecting different denominations—The white flag—Occasions in Dr. Payson's ministry, which called for his conscientious straight-forwardness—Rev. Dr. Nichols' ordination — Mr. Payson's dissent from the opinions of the council — Mr. Willis' remarks on the subject— Mr. Willis' high eulogium on Dr. P. — His act of dismissing the people without the usual benediction explained and defended — Anecdote touching this subject, of the Rev. Mr. Flavel — His leaving the Conference room abruptly, noticed and explained—He did not possess an overbearing spirit.

306

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Would Dr. Payson have been a "reformer," as the term is identified with the present age?—Strictly conservative, yet not averse to modern improvements—The so-called "sixty nine Society," in 1815—Peace Society—The first establishment of Sabbath Schools in Portland—He stood aloof from political struggles—Remarks of others on this subject.

323

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

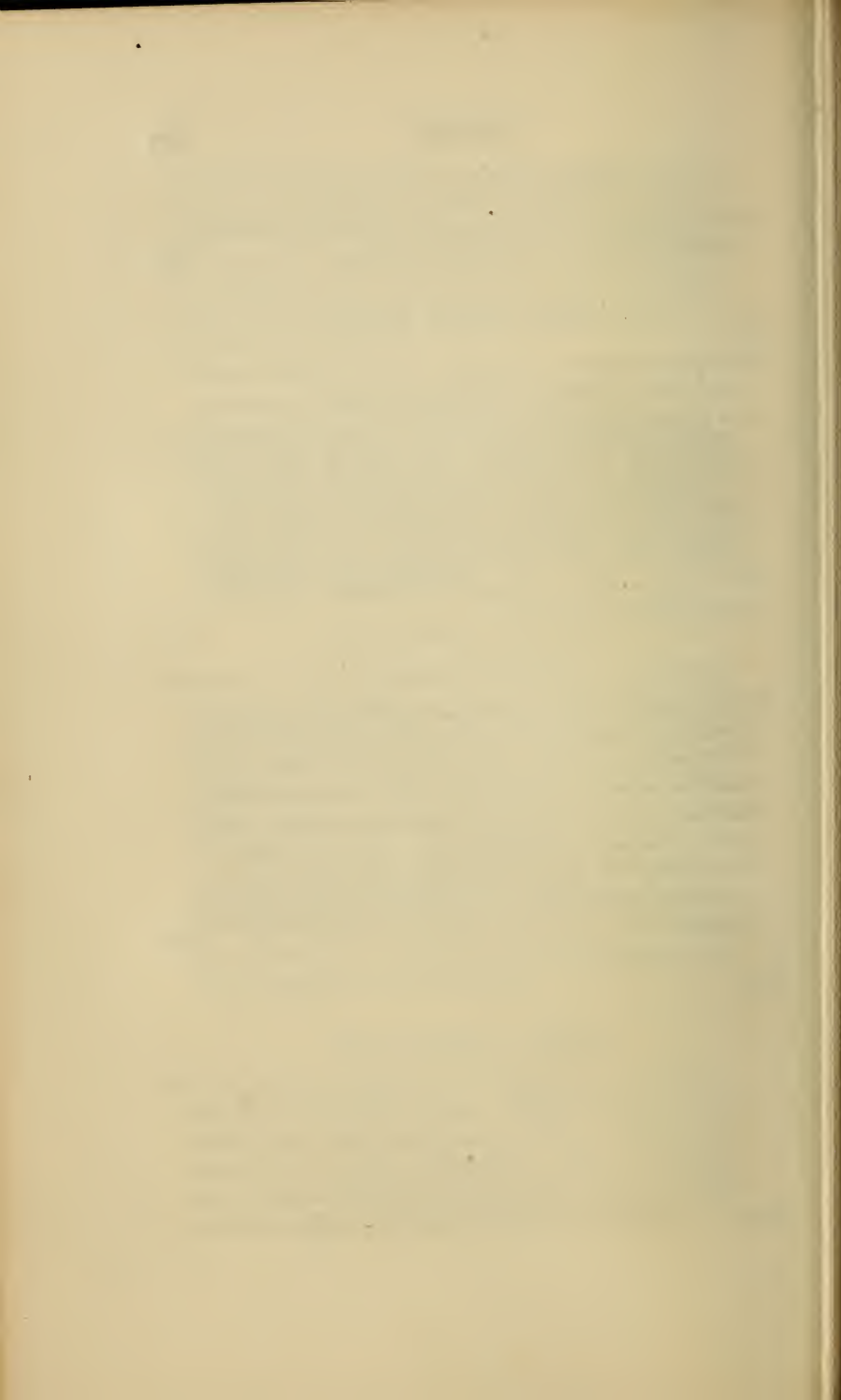
Letters from several individuals respecting Dr. Payson and his ministry — One from Dr. P. to the compiler. 329

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Concluding Reflections upon his general character — His dying hours — Remarks on the intimate connection between the life and the death of individuals — Dying in character — The dying hour the index of the life — An affectionate and respectful consideration of the question, “What effect ought the twenty years of such faithful preaching as Dr. Payson’s to have had upon his hearers?” — Dr. Payson’s remarkably triumphant death only what was to have been anticipated — Some remarks of the biographer of Rev. Mr. Cecil, touching this subject. 33

## APPENDIX.

Portland in 1855 — The prediction respecting its prosperity, fast being accomplished — Portland renowned as the scene of Payson’s labors and place of sepulture — Reflections awakened while on a visit to the house he occupied during the first years of his ministry, — Drs. Reed and Matheson’s visit to Portland — to Dr. Payson’s family and pulpit — Remodelling the church edifice and removal of the pulpit to the vestry — W. B. Tappan’s lines at the grave of Payson. 352



## INTRODUCTION.

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No recollections are more precious than those which relate to the intercourse between a beloved pastor and his flock. Death has sundered the mortal tie, yet upon the memory of the bereaved flock the scenes of a faithful and endeared ministry still linger with undiminished interest. If such a relation is among the last that we forget on earth, will it not be the strongest and purest in heaven, except that only which will subsist between the blood-bought and Him who paid the mighty price for their redemption?

To be able to say of our pastor, he was our spiritual father and guide, we now see him as he stood in the holy place, at the baptismal-font, or at our Master's table, at the bed-side of the sick, or in the house of mourning; or as he walked with us by the way and opened to us the Scriptures; to remember his humble, affectionate demeanor, his untiring efforts for our spiritual improvement; to cast a reflective eye over such departed scenes, how does it gladden the heart even in the sadness of the thought that we shall no more behold his face on the earth.

"The sweet remembrance of the just  
Shall flourish when they sleep in dust."

The fame of Dr. Payson had obtained a currency and an elevation of sufficient notoriety before his death; as much so as was desirable for his own comfort or usefulness. That his popularity was a source of bitter lamentation to himself, is seen from his published diary, a record of humiliating confessions of the "sin that dwelt in him."

No longer an inhabitant of earth, he is alike unaffected by censure and applause—he wrestles and mourns no more. The objects upon that sea of glory upon which he launched, beheld once, in the dimness of mortal vision, and with which he is now surrounded, fill to extacy every capacity of his immortal nature. Transported with the beatific employments of his everlasting home, can he find a thought to bestow upon this "prison of his clay,"

only as memory may revert to the theater of his useful labors, or as the abode of his spirit's thralldom?

It is good to mingle in thought with the scenes of the blest and to dwell by a lively faith on those employments in which we hope, ere-long, ourselves to participate. Such a visit to the spirit-land cannot fail to deaden the glare of earthly attractions, and to clothe the objects of our faith with a deeper reality. There yet live upon the earth those who hung upon his lips and listened to the words of life; who felt the warm breathings of his soul, the subduing power of his soul-lit eye, his kind and cordial embrace. Memory still retains his image in living colors, and we would transmit it as perfect as possible to our children; and children's children in all coming generations shall behold and admire.

And the work should be hastened. Death is hastening with his work; busy year after year in consigning to the dust the remnant of the pastor's flock. A large proportion of his great congregation are now slumbering with him side by side in that greater congregation of the dead. We walk among the tombs and read. The same hand which has chiseled their names upon the "dull cold marble" will soon inscribe ours. Together they sat in heavenly places on earth, together they rest in the place of sepulture. And the morning of the resurrection cometh when together the shepherd and his flock will rise, "for this mortal shall put on immortality." If it be "greatly wise to talk with our past hours," it may be wise and profitable to dwell upon the memory of the "loved and gone," once the busy occupants of those hours, who were eminent examples of piety; not only to stand at their tombs and weep over their ashes, but to recall the pious instructions which fell from their lips. Thus may we walk again with them on earth and live our lives over again, and receive, it may be, a lesson from the dead which shall be more heeded and better improved than those to which we listened from their living lips.

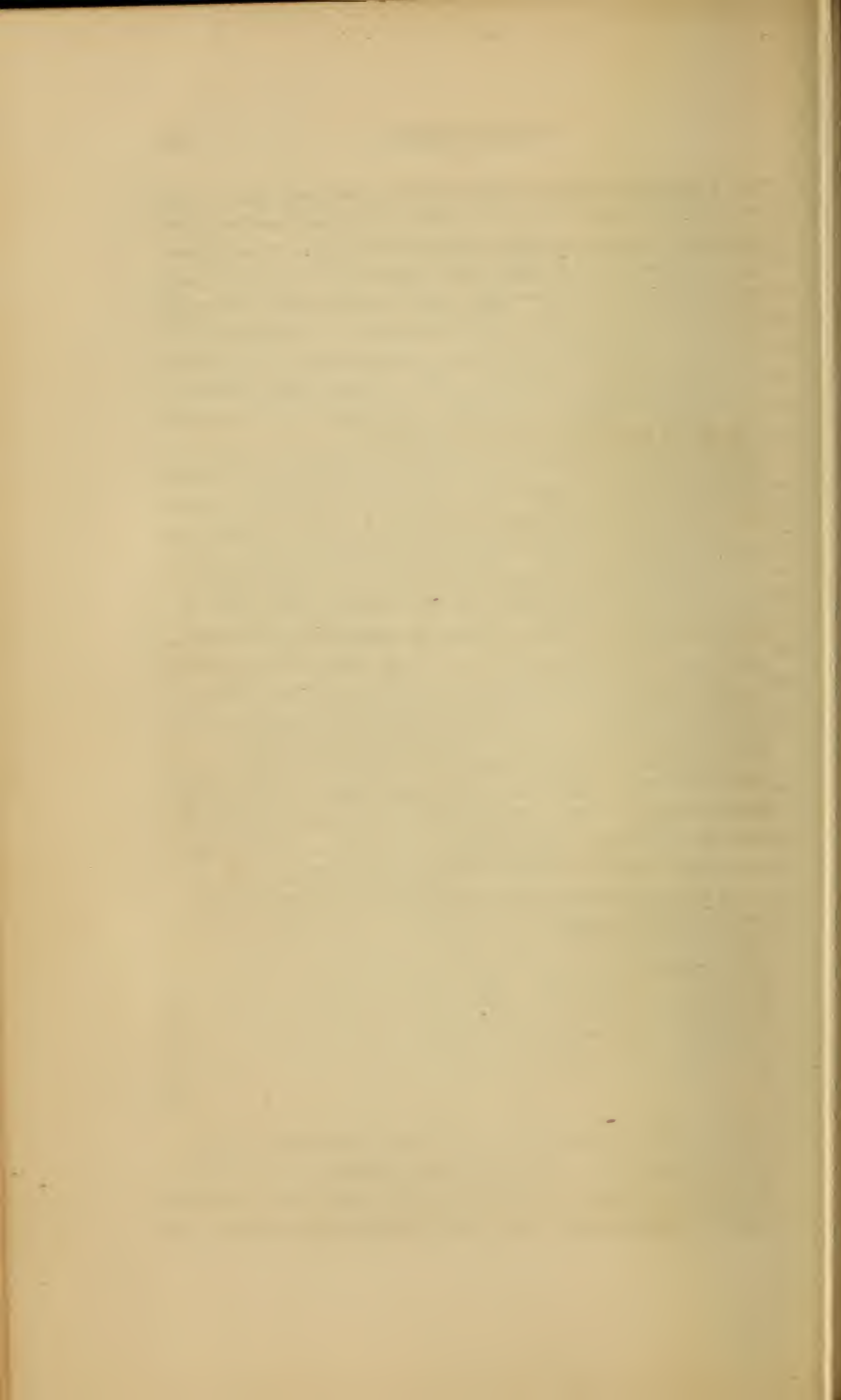
It cannot be doubted that an auto-biography of Dr. Payson would have been a rich legacy to the world. Although his published diary and letters reveal much of his character, yet the curiosity of the public would have been more fully satisfied could the



portrait have been drawn at full length by his own hand. To have published such a biography would doubtless have been too formidable an undertaking for a man of his delicate sensibilities. Such an exposure of himself, as he appeared in his own eyes, would have resembled somewhat the "Prophet's roll," although abounding in sunny spots, joyful triumphs over sin, and "Ebenezers" set up all along the way, as monuments of God's wonderful interposition in his favor. Such a volume must have exhibited a most interesting portraiture, — the lights and shadows of a deep and extraordinary Christian experience.

Equally gratifying would it be, could he have given us a history of his youthful days, a peep into the dawn of his manhood; could he have taken us with him over the hills and valleys of his early home and admitted us to his own contemplations of nature; could he have taken us arm in arm with him to the village school or through the church-yard gate, or on the moonlight stroll, and allowed us to participate in the musings and aspirations of his youthful spirit. Could we have looked into his dark and thoughtful eye and seen pictured there the images of his anticipated future; in a word, could we have seen the future man in the embryo of his youth, how precious do we now feel would be the privilege.

There are but very few allusions to his childhood in any record which we can find. Hence the comparative blank which appears in his early history. Yet so universal has become his fame that an interest attaches to every incident of his earlier or later life, coming from whatever source. We find, however, but little respecting his childhood and youth beyond what is published in his memoir by Dr. Cummings.



# RECOLLECTIONS OF PAYSON.

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## CHAPTER I.

Portland in 1803 and Mr. Payson's introduction there, in the same year. — Anecdotes of Mr. Payson. — His oration on the Fourth of July 1806.

THE writer first became an eye-witness to the rising prosperity of Portland, in 1802, the year before Mr. Payson commenced his labors there as Preceptor of the Academy. Portland at that period was in the hey-day of its youthful pride. It had gradually risen from the fires of the revolution like a Phoenix from its ashes. Commerce was rapidly enriching its enterprising citizens. The several learned professions were most respectably sustained. Young men of sparkling wit and accomplished minds were easily found. Yet Payson mingled with but few. Infidelity, if not seen stalking abroad at noon-day, yet in its shame lurked in the covert of night and the secret conclave. A father's instruction and a mother's prayers, however, still exerted a strong and healthful influence over the mind of our youthful adventurer, in his introduction to the duties of public life. He

brought with him to the place of his first three years' labors a mind imbued with moral principles, by which he was rendered in a measure impregnable to the fascinations of a popular skepticism, and by which he was enabled to shun the vortex of forbidden indulgences. The snare in which others have been taken, he escaped. He was naturally of very retiring habits. He was seldom seen in the streets. When his school hours were over, making a short way home, he was in his rooms poring over his books. He was remarkably neat in his personal appearance. We distinctly remember his attire; his grave yet sprightly and unostentatious mien, and the slight inclination of his head to the left, as on the Sabbath he ascended the stairs of the church on his way to the gallery-pew which he occupied. In his whole demeanor, there was something peculiar even at that early period; an impressiveness and a benignity of countenance seldom seen in the young; while more from diffidence than any feeling of misanthropy or awkwardness (from which he was entirely free) he seemed to pass unheeding and unheeded along, with but little desire to mingle with the busy crowd. His physical constitution, naturally robust, was much impaired while performing the duties of his school, yet he possessed a great deal of energy, physical as well as mental.

An anecdote touching to his superior muscular strength and activity was related to me by a friend and fellow-boarder of his, to this effect. A proposal was made by their host that the three should try their strength in mowing a small field of grass. The man was a giant in stature and the fellow-boarder a person of no mean size. The match commenced. At first Payson lagged. The competition was brisk; each laying himself out to

the utmost, and each "with lusty sinews throwing it aside with hearts of controversy." "Payson will be up with us," said one of them, "*he is*, look out for his scythe;" and in the full swing of his strength did he sweep by them, a noble swath lying at his feet. He continued ahead of them until the work was completed.

An incident was related by his companion just referred to, which perhaps derives its principal interest from the character of the individuals who are the subjects of the notice; yet it may help to illustrate a feature in his character. When Preceptor of the Academy in Portland, if any misdemeanor of his pupils rendered it necessary that some signal correction should be administered, he resorted to the method of locking them up in the school-room during the intermission, where they had to remain until he returned from dinner. On one occasion he had left "locked up," one of the largest sized lads of the school and one who was rather high spirited. On his way home it occurred to him that the culprit might make an attempt to escape from one of the windows, which were at a considerable height from the ground, and by so doing his life or limbs might be endangered. On reaching his boarding house Mr. Payson spoke of the circumstance to the family, at the same time manifesting much uneasiness as to what the result might be. He hastened back to the school room, and as he approached the Academy, his fears were realized; for he saw his young prisoner suspended on the outside of the building, holding on by the window-sill, afraid to fall, and yet unable to get back. Seeing him in this predicament the Preceptor cried out at the top of his voice, "Hold on Belamy, hold on Belamy,"—while he hastened to his rescue. The embarrassment of both parties may easily be imagin-



ed. The ludicrous scene was doubtless often recalled to the mind of the Preceptor; and the pupil, still surviving, and as eminent in his own profession as Payson became in his, will be reminded by this page, should he chance to see it, of one of the amusing passages of his school-boy life.

While in charge of the Academy in Portland, he was but little known, except as a teacher and as a member of a literary club, consisting of young men, law-students and others, who met at appointed times for various literary exercises. Yet he was highly esteemed by all who knew him, as a young man of great respectability and extraordinary talents. It was no equivocal evidence of the estimation in which he was held, that he was selected to deliver the Fourth of July oration, before the citizens of Portland in 1806. Those were times of great political excitement, and Mr. Payson was the chosen orator of the Federal party. He was then in his 22d year; yet well and nobly did he sustain himself on the occasion. The oration is still remembered and spoken of as a most admirable production.

Although the writer had not the pleasure of listening to the oration he well remembers the appearance of the people as they came from the place of concourse, still under the fascination of the discourse. The extreme gratification both of young and old was expressed in an outburst of a most honorable enthusiasm. The youthful orator, with universal consent bore away the palm from all that had preceded him. Says Mr. Willis in his late history of Portland "I attended Mr. Payson's oration, being then one of his pupils, and recollect that it was received with the greatest delight. Many pungent hits at the national administration received hearty applause. It

was very spicy and spirited. The great interest which Prof. McKeen of Harvard College (who was at that time supplying the desk of the First Parish in Portland), seemed to take in the oration, particularly attracted me." Its political character was probably the principal reason of his refusing a copy for the press. He foresaw that a public disclosure of his political views might prove detrimental to his future usefulness as a minister; an early proof of his wisdom and prudence. — They who have since listened to his eloquence can imagine how rich must have been the literary repast furnished to the citizens of Portland on the Fourth of July 1806. Then, even on that very, day went forth the herald that bespoke his coming fame. The same flashes and thunder tones that had broken as in a tempest of eloquence upon a Fourth of July audience, were in a year or two to electrify the crowded, spell-bound congregation of the Sabbath, assembled in the same house, and continued to do so during a period of twenty years. His celebrated oration, I am informed by Hon. S. Patten, his room-mate and bed-fellow for several years, was a very hasty production. Having accepted the invitation of the committee to address them on the occasion, he was only from noon until the next morning in writing and committing it to memory.

Mr. Payson employed his pen occasionally in preparing articles for one of the papers published in Portland. He was, says an acquaintance, a capital poet. He wrote a New Years Address in the Hudibrastic style which was regarded as a very successful production. The remark that "he would have become eminent in either of the learned professions" none can doubt, who were acquainted with the man or his writings. Such was the

extent of his knowledge, his acquaintance with human nature in all its hidden intricacies and developments; his imagination, so inventive and brilliant, that had his attention been directed to the cultivation of poetry or to the writing of fictitious narrative, or had he wooed the tragic muse, in either case success would doubtless have crowned his efforts. Or could conscience have listened for a moment to the suggestion (as it would not) that he might have excelled in the histrionic art, no one would have stood a fairer candidate for success in that profession. The manliness of his person, the energy of his enunciation, the compass and intonations of his voice, the fire of his flashing eye — indeed the strong and flexible expression of his whole countenance, when irradiated by deep emotion, as we have seen it in the pulpit, together with his accurate conception of the character he would personate, would have placed him high among those who have excelled in histrionic effort. We know not to what extent his youthful aspirations might have been kindled, in view of worldly fame or distinction; but, if such an ambition had been awakened in his bosom, the rising flame was soon subdued by a nobler impulse. A “world lying in wickedness” was spread out before him. He saw the curse of God pressing deep and heavy upon the race, which must soon sink its millions in the unmitigated despair of the second death. The Godlike purpose to go forth as a humble instrument to the rescue of his fellow men, sprang up in his heart; a purpose strong and invincible, paramount to all others, and which was carried into execution with a zeal that never abated. Thus, in his early history were seen developed those elements of character, which constituted the man in later life. A path he trod, not indeed strewn with flowers,



often rugged and densely overshadowed ; yet was it the way to endless life, both to himself, and to many whom he will rejoice to meet at the right hand of God, saved through his instrumentality.

Undismayed he held on his way with occasional sun-gleams from the parting cloud, which at last passed away, leaving him to behold the rainbow of promise that overhung his evening sky, until the sun of life went down in mild and unclouded splendor.

We cannot forbear to direct the attention of those young men whose minds are either vacillating on the subject of choosing a profession for life, or who may have decided against entering upon the work of the ministry, to the unalterable purpose which pervaded the breast of the subject of this memoir. Let them consider the amount of good which he was enabled to accomplish and view the "crown of his rejoicing" studded with imperishable jewels that he now wears, and ask themselves in what other way they will be as likely to perform an equal amount of good as by following the example of this devoted minister of Jesus Christ. No man had stronger inducements than he to lay his acquirements upon the altar of worldly ambition, and yet he brought the "gold, frankincense and myrrh," the riches of a highly gifted mind, and laid them down at the Savior's feet. Young man, silence not the voice of conscience, but hear him who now speaks, "Let the dead bury thei dead, but go *thou* and preach the kingdom of God."

The consideration that the minister's life is spent for the good of others, is pleasant indeed when he enters upon his labors, yet amounting to an unspeakable joy when the great master shall call upon his servants to give an account of their stewardship. What if the min-

ister of Christ is expected always to be imparting instruction, "line upon line, line upon line," giving and giving; here sowing and there watering; then watching and now praying, and then dying. Is there no reward? No reaping in all this, even in the present life? Whoso hath left houses and lands and all worldly good for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, shall receive not only the hundred fold here, but in the world to come everlasting life. But why present motives? The "word shut up in the bones," will as surely find a vent, as the fires of Vesuvius. The man fit to preach at all, or who shall hope for success in the ministry, can no more be stopped in his course than can the flowing tide. Obstacles will only strengthen his power of resistance. Tell him of more lucrative occupations, or of more eligible professions, and you do but insult him. Point him to the cross he must take up if he would be a true minister of Jesus Christ, and you do but fan the flame which burns within him.

## CHAPTER II.

His first coming to Portland as a Preacher, and the condition of his field of labor.—The Payson fever.—Anecdote of Mr. N. C. —Evangelical religion greatly revived.—Mr. Payson's ordination.—Rev. Mr. Kellogg's dismissal.—Some remarks on his character.

It was a remarkable era in the history of evangelical truth in Portland, when Mr. Payson commenced his ministerial labors in that place. He appeared as a star of unusual brilliancy, whose presence was hailed as ominous of great good to the cause of piety, and which was seen shedding its light on the surrounding darkness.

In scarcely any period of the Christian church, has the hand of God been more distinctly seen, in raising up special instruments for his work, than when he bestowed upon this church so bright an accession gift ; one who was so eminently endowed with gifts of nature and of grace. His *first sermon* elicited the remark, that no such man as Payson had yet been among them. Nor was it an ephemeral brilliancy that sometimes dazzles the view of an enraptured audience, and calls forth the warmest encomiums upon a gifted orator, soon to vanish in disappointment.

His were sterling traits of character, not tinsel ornaments, but massive and pure gold, as successive years of trial gave ample witness. We have seen that the "gold never became dim, nor the fine gold changed."

An interest was awakened to the subject of religion in the place where he labored, unprecedented in modern times. The period had arrived, when God would work, and he prepared and furnished the instrument.

Of Portland, it is true to remark, though we lament it, that vital piety "had fallen in the streets," at least, or was at a very low ebb. We do not affirm that evangelical truth was not preached there, but it was rendered nearly powerless by reason of the great worldly prosperity with which the place had been visited, during several previous years, although it was now upon the eve of a sad reverse. There was, as is usual, accompanying this tide of worldly success, a strong desire for amusements, which the carnal heart loves; such as theatrical entertainments, balls, assemblies, and card parties. Besides, there was a free and almost universal indulgence in the use of intoxicating beverages, among nearly all classes. This was a feature in their history, however hateful it may now appear to us and to them, which was a destructive feature of the age. A custom, however, not more prevalent there than almost everywhere else at that day.

Neither public opinion then, nor rule of fashion, nor principle of law was violated by this indulgence. We rejoice to know that the general opinion and practice of the remnant of that generation and their children, is now entirely changed.

To the praise of God's grace it should be recorded that here and there an Enoch and a Daniel, a Deborah and an Anna were found, walking with God, "continuing instant in prayer" for the coming of Christ's kingdom, yet were they accounted as rare instances in those times of religious declension. Then there were no Bible-classes and Sabbath schools, as now.

About the time Mr. Payson came, or just before, a religious interest was awakened among the Calvinist Baptists and Methodists. There were also a few congregational brethren and others who were in the habit of assembling for public worship, at different places in town, and who might be considered as a church in an incipient state.

Rev. Jotham Sewall, Rev. Mr. Miltimore of Newbury, and perhaps some others, preached to this congregation. A nucleus was hereby formed, around which a religious society was ultimately organized, and Rev. Dr. Beman now of Troy, New York, was their first settled pastor, who remained with them about two years. They were afterward organized under the name of the Chapel Church, and Rev. E. Kellogg, was installed over them. He was succeeded by two or three others. With a reorganization in 1832, the Society took the name of the Third Congregational Church and Society. It has since become one of the most flourishing churches in the city, and is under the supervision of Rev. W. T. Dwight, D. D., its present Pastor.

It was doubtless owing, under God, to the coming of so extraordinary a man as Mr. Payson among the people, that the cause of evangelical religion so greatly revived in the town and vicinity, and in a measure through the State.

The Church of God was seen "coming up from the wilderness;" the Spirit was evidently present, to accompany the labors of his servant, and "the thoughts of many hearts were revealed." An unwonted seriousness prevailed generally among the people, and a cloud of no doubtful promise appeared in the horizon, giving signs of an abundance of rain.



The "Payson fever," a term of reproach which obtained among the opposers of the truth in the place, was indeed spreading not without alarm, and to the great annoyance and vexation of those who began to feel that their peace was to be endangered by this epidemic, and their worldly joys were to be jeopardized.

The ark of God had indeed come among them, and "Dagon must fall." The term which they had affixed to this spreading fanaticism, was sarcastic and a misnomer.

It was not the "Payson fever," which had begun to do its work of devastation and ruin, it was the power of the Holy Spirit, in his life and energy, convincing sinners of the "plague of their own hearts;" and it was through the instrumentality of this skilful physician, that they were directed to the Balm of Gilead, and the greater Physician there.

With the diagnosis of their disease Mr. Payson was well acquainted. Himself a "stricken deer," he could direct to a cure, from deep personal acquaintance with sin and with Him who came to pluck away its deadly sting. In a word "Ephraim was made to see his sickness and Judah to feel his wound."

Mr. Payson continued to preach with great fervency and power; the kingdom of darkness trembled, and the cry of keen mental anguish was heard in different parts of the town.

"Is the Lord among us or not?" a question, often the offspring of despondency and unbelief, was about to be decided in the most satisfactory manner to the friends of evangelical truth. Those in the circles of the wealthy and the gay as well as those in the more humble spheres, were seen bowing their ears to religious instruction, "watching at wisdom's gates, and waiting at the posts of

her doors." Vital piety, which had been so generally despised or undervalued among us, had become respected and embraced by many; and was seen standing up unabashed in its pristine purity.

Mr. C., a very distinguished, yet somewhat eccentric Christian professor, who had long been singing his solo strains, even "the Lord's song in a strange land," and who never would "hang his harp upon the willows" come what would, reproach or persecution, storm or sunshine, was now heard to remark, that "when he first made a profession of religion, it went barefoot, but now, in silver slippers." Zion was indeed now seen putting on her garments of salvation, while "beautiful upon the mountains, appeared the feet of them who published salvation" by the cross.

In connection with the religious history of Portland, the gentleman here alluded to, Mr. N. C., deserves a passing notice. He was originally from Newburyport, a very respectable citizen, and of an excellent Christian character; noted for his zeal in religion; and especially useful to young converts, and Christians under their various trials, to whom they could repair for counsel. He was at this time very much alone in his profession, there being but few with whom he was disposed to hold spiritual fellowship. His house was a home for ministers and Christians who visited the place. By occupation a tin-plate worker, he was always found at his shop; and he would hammer and solder, and quote Matthew Henry (his favorite commentator) by the hour together. You seldom met him, but he would inquire into your spiritual state rather abruptly withal, yet was it always taken in good part. Religion had a very decided ascendancy in his mind; — this was apparent to all, both friends and foes.

Among professors of religion too, the truth so scorching in its character, accompanied by the spirit, was making fearful developments of hypocrisy or of a Laodicean spirit. God had come down from his holy place "to find out the men who were settled upon their lees," who had said "the Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil."

The amiable yet self-deceived moralist, began to discover the plague-spot in the heart; and convinced of the need of a better righteousness than his own, was seen fleeing to Him who had wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness for the naked souls of men.

There was indeed "great joy in that city." The scoffer paid no longer an unwilling homage to the power that was doing wonders around him, and which had opened his own heart, to receive the Savior. The beauties of the new creation were seen upon the countenance, and in the families of many, but recently the decided enemies of the truth. Contumely was exchanged for the highest respect for religion generally, and for the minister whom God had sent among them, and the clear and discriminating and humbling doctrines which he so fearlessly, yet affectionately preached.

"We beseech thee to depart out of our coasts," many could have said before, who now had changed their tune almost into "Hosanna, blessed art thou who comest in the name of the Lord." The eyes once holden, are opened to behold the glory of Christ, and the heart hitherto "the cage of every unclean and hateful bird," is undergoing the purifying process which the Holy Ghost performs, when He enters to prepare himself a residence among the sons of men.

We have already admitted that at the time Dr. Payson commenced his labors in P., there was genuine piety in



the place, as seen in a few solitary examples ; nor was the truth withholden from the pulpit ; yet the truth had but few professors, and the world hung upon it as an incubus. To remove the spiritual torpor, to resuscitate the dying embers, was this man of God sent, as a humble instrument among them. Yet many remained unbelieving ; refusing to submit their understandings, or to bow their hearts to the truth thus presented, who were nevertheless induced to inquire more or less covertly, “ are these things so ? ”

Had this excitement produced only fruits of a mushroom growth, it doubtless would have soon been apparent. But how different its character as seen in its results. The illusive meteor vanishes anon, while the light of the morning is steady and progressive, even unto the perfect day. That this was the character of this great movement among the people of Dr. Payson’s early ministry, cannot be doubted.

His character from the commencement of his ministry above suspicion, became still more highly appreciated as long as he lived among them. The tongue of slander was occasionally moved against him, just enough, perhaps, to insure to him the divine blessing, but no man could be in fact, more invulnerable to the poisoned shaft ; no man less deserved the reproach of men.

His humble and unostentatious demeanor ; his zeal, ardent, yet so well-tempered ; his aims, so lofty, yet so single ; his eloquence as a preacher excelling all who had been there before him ; his love for the souls of his people ; his entire consecration to his Master’s work ; were so apparent, so undeniable, that he could not but secure the confidence and respect of all discerning and ingenuous minds.

The Lord had much people in this place, and He who directeth the steps of his ministers, appointed this eminent servant to labor where He himself would come, that he "might gather fruit unto life eternal."

Doubtless the remark was often made, while the community was all astir, during these scenes of religious awakening, somewhat like that of old; "They who have turned the world upside down, have come hither also." Yet such an overturn in the community, was only the legitimate effect of the plain and earnest application of divine truth to the conscience.

It was a demonstrative exhibition of cause and effect; and to every wondering inquirer respecting such results as were then witnessed, or as are ever witnessed on similar occasions, we may safely answer in the language of Christ to the disciples of John, who had been sent of him to inquire who it was that was performing such mighty deeds, the knowledge of which had come to his ears, "Go tell John, what ye do see and hear; the sick are healed; the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised." Tell John this, and he will be satisfied as to my character and doctrines, who I am, my mission and my authority. The facts speak for themselves. John knows, that divine power alone can give life to the dead. So when sinners dead in trespasses and sins pass from death unto life, there is a special power and a divine blessing accompanying those doctrines that have produced such a change. God's own power is manifest, and present to heal.

To such doctrines as Dr. Payson preached, God sets his seal of approbation and salvation, but no such distinguishing accompaniment is seen to follow the preaching of an opposite character, or of a negative character

or as we may say, of no character at all. We saw the influence of Payson's life and labors in Portland and in the adjacent towns, in counteracting a spirit of worldliness and skepticism.

How clearly we then saw, and do still see, that just such a man as he, was needed for those times ; as we see that just such men as Luther and Knox were needed for the day in which they lived ; and may we not add, just such men as are needed for the present and for all times.

#### HIS ORDINATION.

It was in August 1807, that Mr. Payson commenced his labors with the Second Church in Portland.

His rising fame had already attracted the notice of the churches, and he had received several invitations to preach as a candidate for settlement.

It was matter of perplexity to his own mind, as to the choice he should make of these several offers. To our very great gratification, he signified his acceptance of an invitation to become our pastor, while nothing in Providence occurred afterwards, that led us to believe that he had mis-chosen his field of labor.

The great and important results which have flowed from his settlement in Portland, gave unequivocal evidence that his prayers for divine guidance in this matter, were heard and answered.

In December of the same year he received ordination. Most of those composing the council, have been removed by death. Besides the aid from the neighboring churches, there were present, the Rev. Dr. Buckminster, of Portsmouth, N. H., and the Rev. Dr. S. Payson, of Ringe, N. H., father of the candidate, who preached the sermon ; the former giving the charge to the pastor.

It was the custom in those days, for the pastor-elect to make a public announcement of his acceptance of the call, on the day of ordination. The service on that occasion, we remember to have been peculiarly solemn, as the youthful candidate stood up before the large assembly, and in tones evincive of deep feeling, seemed to realize the weight of responsibility he was about to assume.

The whole scene is too deeply impressed upon our mind, ever to be forgotten. The sermon was founded upon Paul's words to Timothy, "Lay hands suddenly on no man." This injunction of the Apostle, repeated and enforced by parental authority and affection, the son never ceased to observe, both in its spirit and letter, as his subsequent course on ordination occasions, sufficiently testifies.

The deep devotion which pervaded the mind of the father, during his delivery of the sermon, and especially at the close, when he addressed the pastor elect, as his "*dear son*," served to remind us all of that dear son, whom we were now to look upon as our own beloved pastor, and which could not fail to awaken, in hearts that so dearly loved him, unutterable emotions.

In matter and manner as a preacher, Dr. Payson has been compared to President Davies, of Nassau Hall.—The comparison we should think a very just one.

Judging from the sermon of his father, preached at the ordination, and others we have read from the same pen, we know of no other preacher, whom Dr. Payson so nearly resembled. There was the same characteristic pathos and simplicity of manner, the same affectionate tones, the same plainness, directness and transparency of style, common to the preaching of the father and the son.



It is only just to observe here, that the individual who was principally instrumental of procuring the services of Mr. Payson for the second parish in Portland, was the Rev. Elijah Kellogg, the pastor of that church, and with whom Mr. Payson now became associated as colleague.

This connection continued for nearly four years. The senior pastor usually preached in the forenoon, and the junior pastor in the afternoon of the Sabbath, and also on Thursday evenings a stated lecture. At the weekly conference meetings, sometimes one presided, sometimes the other.

Mr. Willis in his history of Portland, speaks of the character of Mr. Kellogg, and of his settlement there, in terms highly commendatory, as follows :

“He exerted a powerful influence in the community, when he came to Portland, as a man of fine talents, and of great ardor ; but he was unhappily drawn into worldly speculations, which greatly diminished his influence.”

Perhaps it may be considered an apology for Mr. K., for the writer to state, that Mr. K's. avowed object, in seeking to accumulate property was, that he might be able to preach the gospel without charge to his people. Whether the end will justify the means in the case, is somewhat questionable.

There is nothing to show that the connection between the two pastors, was mutually pleasant, even as between a father and son.

In his journal, Mr. Payson speaks of Mr. K., in the kindest terms, and with much affection.

During the four years of their colleagueship, the latter manifested a becoming zeal and interest in his ministe-

rial labors. In a journal kept by the compiler, frequent mention is made of his able and edifying discourses.

With Mr. Kellogg's doctrinal sentiments, Mr. Payson was satisfied, or he would not have consented to become connected with him as a colleague. And yet it seemed to be the design of Providence, that this connection should be dissolved at an early and unexpected period.

Such had become the state of things in the parish, that it was judged advisable that a council should be called for that purpose, which took place on the 5th of December 1811. Of the members of that council, it is believed that one only is now living, the Rev. Asa Rand.

From that council, of which Rev. Mr. Lancaster, of Scarboro', was moderator, and Rev. Francis Brown, of North Yarmouth, was scribe, Mr. Kellogg received a recommendation as follows, on condition of certain concessions on the part of Mr. Kellogg :

"The council recommend him for the work of the ministry, wherever God in his holy providence shall call him. And from the knowledge the council have, of the candor and tenderness, with which both the church and the junior pastor, the Rev. Mr. Payson, have been disposed to treat the Rev. Mr. Kellogg, through the whole scene of their recent difficulties, they indulge the confident anticipation that the church will cheerfully unite with the Council in the preceeding recommendation."

Mr. Kellogg accepted the result of Council as by letter to the Second Church, Dec. 11, 1811, a copy of which the compiler has in his possession.

According to the hope of the Council, the church passed a vote "that respecting the transactions of the Council, they were satisfied."

The following entry is found on the church records :  
“ Voted that the church unite with the Council, in recommending Rev. Mr. Kellogg, to the work of the Gospel ministry : praying that he may find by happy experience, his trials promoting his best good and future usefulness.”

The shock to Mr. Kellogg and his friends, occasioned by this rupture of solemn and tender ties, (and it was a severe one, as we who witnessed the painful scene, do well remember,) Mr. Kellogg acknowledged was of special spiritual benefit to him. His christian and ministerial light shone brighter ever afterwards ; nor did his zeal in the cause of his master seem to abate, through a period of thirty successive years, which brought him to the good old age of eighty-two, when he ceased from his labors on earth.

As a Missionary in the eastern part of Maine, among the Aborigines, and in establishing churches, or in aiding feeble ones, he was successful and unwearied.

His memory is endeared to many in Washington Co., Maine, who are now enjoying the fruits of his labors as a pioneer among them.

Of this fact, the writer can testify from his own knowledge, having recently visited some of the churches he planted in that region, who had his heart made glad, when hearing many a blessing pronounced upon the memory of “ Father Kellogg.”

His venerable relict removed from Portland, a few years ago, to reside with her son, the Rev. E. Kellogg, at Harpswell, where she has since deceased.

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NOTE.—As a memorial of respect to the several pastors of the Second Church their names have been inscribed upon two marble slabs, one on each side of the pulpit. Rev. Elijah Kellogg stands first, Edward Payson next ; then follow successively the names



In justification of his course, in introducing this subject to the public, the compiler, who was an intimate friend of Mr. K., has no other motive but to present such an impartial view of it, as may prove satisfactory to all parties concerned.

Such was the excitement at the time of the event, and for a considerable length of time afterwards, that it was doubtless considered by the compiler of "Dr. Payson's Memoir" as injudicious to touch particularly upon the subject. Probably, some at the present day, may judge it to be inexpedient to do so now.

The compiler of this work, having an intimate knowledge of the whole matter, and being one of the actors in the scene, has thought that an impartial history of those times, required this exhibition of the transaction, that justice might be awarded both to the senior and the junior pastor.

We think that no opprobrium should rest upon the character or the memory of Dr. Payson, for all our knowledge of his pastoral and christian integrity forbid it. Nor should we withhold our respect for the memory of Mr. Kellogg, by an *unjust silence*, deeming that the names of both pastors should appear in this history, side by side, and go down to posterity together, in respectful companionship.

In conclusion we remark, that seeing the Great Head of the Church had evident designs of mercy in this event; and that a respectable council had thought it expedient that the pastoral relation should be dissolved; it

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of Bennet Tyler, D. D., Joseph Vaill, D. D., and Jona. B. Condit, D. D.

The edifice was built for Rev. Mr. Kellogg, in 1787, and has several times since been re-modeled.

is not for us, at this distance of time, to look up the causes which more directly or indirectly led to the result.

The situation of the two pastors may be represented as follows :

One had been planted a young tree, side by side with the other. The soil which was congenial to the one, was such to the other. The younger tree took deep root, flourished, and bore fruit abundantly. The elder ceased not in its fruitfulness. There was no apparent interference among the branches, or roots ; and yet the plough-share must needs go through the field, and under the hand of the great Dresser of the vineyard, " one was taken, and the other left."

It did not behoove the junior pastor to interpose in this matter ; (i. e. he probably so thought) or to upbraid the wisdom or the sovereignty of the great Disposer of events, whatever might be the result. He left it so. He felt his incompetency to fathom the designs of God, and conscientiously avoided any personal interference ; deeming it his duty, to observe a strict neutrality in the case.

Whatever may be said by friend or foe with respect to the result, the crowning glory of the whole dispensation, was, the subsequent prosperity of Dr. Payson's ministry ; and the removal of the original tree from its place, only caused it to be more abundant in fruit-bearing. Whatever complexion the whole affair may have assumed, or does still assume, in the eyes of short-sighted mortals, we may safely say, " God meant it for good."

Mr. Willis further states respecting Mr. Kellogg ; " His address at the funeral of Rev. Thomas Smith, the venerable pastor of the 1st Church in Portland, affords evidence that Mr. K. was master of a touching and finished style of composition, and very original withal."

We may also add, in confirmation of the above sentiment, an incident which took place in 1807. The packet schooner Charles from Boston for Portland, commanded by Capt. Adams, with a number of passengers on board, was wrecked on Richmond's Island, near Portland harbor, with the loss of several lives ; among which were the captain and his wife.

The funeral was attended at the church of Mr. Kellogg, who conducted the religious services of the occasion. It was a scene of deep interest and solemnity. We distinctly remember, during Mr. Kellogg's address, how eloquent he became, when addressing the bereaved mourners, and as he pointed to the mourning pew of Capt. Adams, then occupied by the stricken and desolate family, with the words, "*Behold, yon little nest of orphans.*"

As on the sculptured marble, so on the page of the ecclesiastical history of Portland, let the names of this father and son in the ministry, be transmitted to posterity, in fair and mutual companionship.

Let us be willing to say, that they had imperfections in common with our fallen race. Let it suffice, that, passed to their immortality, they are now forever free from them.

" Nor draw their frailties from their dread abode, —  
There they alike in trembling hope repose,  
The bosom of their Father and their God."

### CHAPTER III.

The sources of Dr. Payson's popularity considered.—The character of his preaching. His appearance in the pulpit.—Anecdote of the Indians.—The high estimation in which he was held by his people —Invariably the same with strangers.—Opposition awakened by his preaching.—An anecdote.—The extraordinary solemnity which his sermons produced upon the minds of his audience, *did not leave them*, when they retired from the sanctuary.

Dr. Payson's pulpit talents were of a different character from those of Wesley and Whitefield : yet had he chosen an itinerant ministry, he could scarcely have failed to reach an equal eminence with them. His fame as a preacher, both at home and abroad, remained undiminished.

The scintillations of genius that flashed from his pulpit discourses, attracted the admiration of many. His deep piety and Christian experience were appreciated by others ; while some who disliked his doctrines, were charmed by his style and manner. Thus were crowds drawn to hear him for the gratification of their respective tastes.

He overlooked no class of his hearers. Each felt that the speaker came with a message from God to him. The peculiar necessities of the tempted, and the afflicted, and of all, under their various circumstances of trial, shared his sympathies ; while no class of the impenitent escaped his faithful, yet affectionate reproofs.



Although but a young man, there was no unripeness in his youth.

The old and experienced Christian was not heard to say, I can learn nothing from him. Age, wisdom, and experience were seen sitting under the shadow of his pulpit with great delight.

The honorable and the wealthy, and those of different denominations, appreciated and improved the privilege of listening to his instructions, and with the deepest interest. In years he was a child, in understanding, a man.

Said the Rev. Dr. W., of the Baptist denomination, to the writer, "I have listened to four sermons in my lifetime, which I have set down as *great sermons*; one of them I heard from Dr. Payson."

Although he sought not to win popularity, popular favor was awarded him in no stinted measure. Yet he coveted the approval of his own conscience, rather than honor from men; the plaudit of the Judge at the great day of reckoning, rather than the caresses of the world.

He "coveted indeed the best gifts;" but it was for usefulness rather than for display; not for his own honor, but for the glory of his Master. He would "seek great things," not for himself, but for Christ.

He strove to be "a workman, that needeth not to be ashamed." If men would come to hear, and go away to applaud and to admire, that was no fault of his; and yet this man of God, like all other faithful ministers, had to make his account with reproach and contumely, and sometimes, hard usage. As was before hinted, his name became associated with popular opprobrium and ridicule. It was more especially so, during the early period of his ministry. Nor did his *church* escape the lash of ridicule and reproach. The living coal of natural depravity,

which had been so long covered up, now began to flare out in sparks and flame. The lion was aroused, and at times his yells were truly hideous. This was only as was to be expected. The friends of God were not alarmed at this. They knew what it usually portends. Payson in his own experience "had fought with beasts at Ephesus," and the lion's howl he well understood, and knew as in his own case, how easy it was for God to chain the lion, or change his ferocious nature into the meekness of the lamb. Unpleasant as it may be to witness the ebullition of the heart's enmity to the truth, yet a minister is less discouraged by such a state of things, than at the apathy which is the image of spiritual death. He would rather witness the former than the latter. After the storm-cloud, look out for the rainbow. It is in agreement with the operations of the human mind, that the stormy and violent passions, should soon exhaust themselves, and then subside into a calm; or that the strong blowing of the wind in one direction, will be succeeded by one equally strong from the opposite point. Sudden transitions from enmity to love, are seen in persons, in a time of revival. God often comes to the sinner's conscience in this way, that he may feel the force of truth, and be left to vent his wrath against it, whereby a reaction is produced, which is often overruled for the accomplishment of God's gracious design in his conversion. Thus God makes "the wrath of man to praise Him."

Dr. Payson was willing, if necessary, to be the instrument, or the innocent occasion (even as was our Lord) of causing division and opposition in the community, if such a state of things should subserve the purposes of God in the salvation of men.

Indeed, he saw that his preaching, to be what it should be, could scarcely have any other effect upon the carnal mind than to awaken such an opposition. Although forbearing and gentle to all men, where his personal interests were concerned, yet like Paul he had sometimes to remonstrate with his people, in the language of that Apostle, "Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth."

Persons in an awakened state of mind he diligently sought out and visited. On hearing that a lady of a very respectable family, needed his counsel and prayers, he waited upon her at her own house. When retiring, he was met by her husband, who suspecting the object of his visit, became exceedingly angry, and very unceremoniously threatened to horse-whip him, if he should ever come again on a similar errand. The only reply Dr. Payson made, was, "Mr. —, I can pray for you."

And this same man, who could sacrifice his own self-respect to gratify his indomitable malice against religion, was heard to say that "Payson was as great an enthusiast as the Apostle Paul : "in fact," said he, "he is just like him." The man's heart meditated only abusive satire both to the Apostle and Dr. Payson, yet did his remarks, unintentionally, contain a compliment to both, as high as was in his power to pay.

The unquestioned sincerity, manifest in his preaching, won the attention and hearts of his hearers.

"Lord, how can man preach thy Eternal word;  
He is a brittle, crazy glass;  
Yet in thy Temple, Thou dost him afford  
This glorious and transcendent place,  
To be a *window*, through thy grace.



But when Thou dost anneal in glass thy story,  
 Making Thy life to shine within  
 The holy preacher ; then the light and glory  
 More reverend grows ; and more doth win ;  
 Which, else, grows wat'rish, bleak and thin.

*Doctrine and life, colors and light in one,*  
 When they combine and mingle, bring  
 A strong regard and awe ; but *speech alone,*  
 Doth vanish like a flaring thing,  
 And in the *ear*, not *conscience*, ring."

HERBERT.

The possession of these most valuable qualities, viz : his sincerity and deep sympathy for his people while addressing them, was, doubtless, the grand secret of his popularity, his great power and success as a preacher.

The manifestation of this deep eloquence of feeling would almost disarm enmity itself of its virulence, in most cases ; arouse the indifferent to respectful attention, and leave upon the conscience a deep-felt conviction that the preacher, misguided or fanatical as they might suppose him to be, was at least sincere — that he believed and felt the truths which he uttered. Remarks one, of a celebrated English orator, "He possesses these essential elements of all greatness, *powerful convictions* ; he is a man thoroughly in earnest. That man will do great things, for he believes what he speaks."

"I seek not yours, but you," is a declaration, which, probably, no man since the Apostle's day, could have uttered with more sincerity than Dr. Payson ; and his people read it in every lineament of his countenance, in every tone of his voice, in every action of his life.

He did not preach what he but half believed. Herein consisted the great power which his preaching had upon

the consciences and hearts of his hearers. They would sometimes quarrel and fret under his faithful rebukes, but church and people were compelled to acknowledge that their minister invariably sought their spiritual good.

However they might doubt the disinterestedness of any other minister, no imputation of sinister motives could they, in conscience, cast upon their own.

The effectiveness of preaching, as is plainly seen, depends very much in all cases, upon the character of the preacher.

It is the holy life which gives emphasis to what is spoken from the pulpit. It is not difficult to see, how much the eminent piety of such men as President Edwards, David Brainard, and Edward Payson, had to do with the great success which attended their labors. It is character that speaks. "I could answer the arguments in favor of religion which came from the pulpit," said a converted Infidel, "but the principles of religion carried out in the life of one of my pious neighbors, I could not withstand — *He lived me to death.*" Beautiful and true in themselves, as are the words of our blessed Lord, yet had no revelation of his love and condescension, his agony and self denial, been made in his wonderful life, his instructions had been less impressive ;

" But in his life, the law appears  
Drawn out in living characters."

With this clear insight into the character and motives of our pastor, we cheerfully submitted to his faithful reproofs, conscious also that they were not undeserved : we knew that he loved us ; we gave him full credit for his fidelity, and could bear anything from one to whom we were so warmly devoted.

Yet there was an absence of all harshness in his manner in the pulpit. His sentences were like barbed arrows, yet pointed with love. These strongly marked qualities of sympathy and tenderness in his preaching, we dwell upon the longer, because of their vast importance, in the preacher who would be successful in his ministry, and because of the manifest want of these, in too many pulpit performances.

We hear some celebrated speaker alluded to, as possessing great oratorical powers, carrying all before him, in his extraordinary popularity ; as a man of great moral courage, a bold reprover of the sins of the times ; yet it is often merely *scolding* by the hour. There is an absence of that kind, tender, conciliatory spirit, which wins upon the heart ; it is a vociferation which is no more adapted to produce conviction upon the audience, or to soothe the perturbation of an anxious or distressed mind, than would the clattering of the church windows in a tornado.

Such a wrought up tempest in the mind of a speaker, as is sometimes witnessed, resembles the "madness of the prophet," uttered in his reproachful language to the unoffending animal he rode upon. The lacerated bosom, and the stupid and hardened infidel alike, repel all such heartless efforts of the would-be faithful, fervent speaker. There is a discernment and a sensitiveness in the human mind, that detects at once the absence of those soft and subduing qualities in one who addresses us, by which alone the impenitent can be wooed or won. "I could be willing" said one, speaking on this subject, "for the minister to adjudge me to hell, if he appeared to be sorry for it."

Dr. Payson's appearance in the pulpit was always unassuming in an uncommon degree. With whatever emotions of pride or self-complacency he might have had to

struggle, arising either from his success or his fame, his demeanor betrayed no such inward conflict. Nor in that lowly deportment, did there appear the least evidence of the affectation of humility.

There was with him, no counterfeited grace to conceal spiritual pride. Everything about him, or appertaining to his behavior in the pulpit, was open as day-light. Sincerity marked every movement. God is here, he seemed to say, — it is to His omniscient gaze, I desire to stand approved.

His was the meek and quiet spirit, and so acknowledged even by those who were of a contrary spirit, accompanied by that dignity of manner, which compelled those who stood in his presence to confess “ How awful goodness is.” No assumed airs of conscious superiority, no aristocracy of feeling, as are sometimes seen developing themselves in some popular ministers, perhaps the fruit of undue caresses from the people, were ever apparent in the subject of this memoir. A sinner, saved by grace, a sinner carried along in Christ’s own arms to heaven, he loved to acknowledge himself to be.

His entire life, in every emergency, in every act, in every word and feeling, betokened only such a spirit ; all God’s dealings with him, were to make and keep him humble.\*

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\* The following anecdote published in one of our periodicals, I cannot forbear to insert, as it is so strikingly appropriate to Dr P., in the particular above mentioned.

INDIANS JUDGING OF MINISTERS.—Some years ago, three American ministers went to preach to the Cherokees. One preached very deliberately and coolly, and the chiefs held a council to know whether the Great Spirit spoke to them through this man. They declared he did not, because he was not so much engaged as *their* head-men were in their national concerns. Another spake to them in a most vehement manner, and they again determined in council,



Although his preaching, as all acknowledged, was exceedingly impressive, yet there was no cant about it ; no whining ; no crocodile tears ; although he often wept tears of agony for his people.

There was no loud and boisterous declamation, as if he supposed power and sense to consist in sound ; no attempts to " split the ears of the groundlings." He was seen, indeed, at times, choking with deep emotion, while preaching, as if overwhelmed with the importance of his subject, yet endeavoring evidently to suppress such emotions.

We are not saying that very good ministers do not sometimes weep over their sermons, while preaching them. We remember to have heard of a minister who, in order to assist his memory, and to give effect to his elocution, wrote upon his manuscript, at successive intervals, (" *cry here ;* ") a very convenient practice by the way, and affording an argument in favor of *written* sermons, which we do not remember to have seen used.

Dr. Payson was moved by his subject, resistlessly, yet steadily along. No suspicion was awakened in the minds of his hearers, that he was " dealing in the commerce of unfelt truths," or was wantonly dallying with the passions of his hearers. Nay, it was the truth, invariably producing upon the minds of his audience the conviction of its importance, as it was simultaneously ruling in its mighty sway over his own mind. We saw it kindling and burning in his soul, and it caught upon others, until the whole assembly resembled a prairie on fire.

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that the Great Spirit did not speak to them through that man, because he was *mad*. The third preached to them in an earnest and fervent manner ; and they agreed that the Great Spirit might speak through him, because he was both earnest and affectionate. The last was ever kindly received.



As there was nothing clandestine in his outward life, so there was nothing of the kind in his heart, or in the pulpit. Nothing smuggled he there, at any time. He was no plagiarist. All was open, fair, legitimate. He made his own furrow. He was himself; profound, independent, original. Thoroughly drenched in the baptism of a devout piety, he felt it all over, to "his finger's ends." Not exactly in accordance with the Quaker sentiment, and of course below a prophetic inspiration, yet he spake, and lived, as one "moved by the Holy Ghost."

His "zeal did indeed consume him." The entire devotedness to his great work, from the commencement of his labors, so apparent in all the sacrifices and self-denials which he made for his people, strengthened their attachment to him, and gave a power to his ministrations, above those of almost any other man.

The graces of the Spirit, which he possessed in so eminent a degree, in connexion with his rare intellectual endowments, (of which we shall speak hereafter,) constituted him the man he was; the true hearted and able servant of Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER IV.

His prayers.—His views of the importance of prayer.—He excelled in the performance of the duty —The effect of his prayers on himself—and upon the congregation. — His prayer at the interment of the Commanders of the Enterprise and Boxer.— His confessions of sin and unworthiness in his prayers—not the effects of nervousness or insanity — shown that they proceeded from a very different cause.

“ Since then, these three wait on thy throne,  
Ease, Power, and Love, I value prayer so,  
That were I to leave all but one,  
Wealth, fame, endowments, virtues; all should go;  
I and dear prayer, would together dwell,  
And quickly gain, for each *inch* lost, an *ell*.”

HERBERT

Eminent as Dr. Payson was, as a man of prayer, not only in fervency but in frequency, yet he has been known to say, that had he his life to live over again, he should choose to spend half of it in prayer.

That he excelled almost all others in this duty, has been universally acknowledged. Strangers who have been present during devotional exercises, have been struck with amazement at the copiousness and fervency of his prayers.

His own people, after hearing him pray a thousand times, were no less interested than at first. In the Conference room, and at funerals, and on all public occasions, the same originality and appropriateness were always apparent.

Those only, who remember with what deep emotion he pronounced the line contained in one of his favorite hymns,

“My soul *stands trembling* while she sings,”

can have an adequate idea of the peculiar solemnity of his utterance in prayer. Literally, “he seemed to stand trembling” while in the more immediate presence of his Maker. Prostrated with a view of the immeasurable distance between God and all created beings; and yet withal, possessing such an humble, childlike confidence in God as his Heavenly Father, he poured out the overflowings of his soul into the Divine bosom; and in language and manner peculiarly his own, he would confess, or supplicate, or render praise, in tones of the deepest solemnity, which tended to enkindle at the same time, corresponding emotions in the souls of his hearers.

He was in the habit of pausing for a considerable time when the audience rose for prayer, before he commenced. It could not but add to the solemnity of the effect, as well as afford aid to the speaker, to have that large congregation *rise up* to pray, simultaneously with him, that when he said “let us worship God,” they so reverently replied, yea Lord; “When Thou said’st seek ye my face, my heart said, Thy face, Lord, will we seek.” That concurring aid and sympathy from the people, he who leads in the prayers of the sanctuary at the present day, is sometimes obliged to forego, when the audience sit still as stumps.

The pause, just spoken of, was very solemn and impressive, implying more than words could have expressed. The soul was uncovering itself then ; and the feet were being made bare, because the place of standing was holy ground," and every heart in the assembly that was wont to bow, bowed as the heart of one man.

Dr. P. being once inquired of, why he thus paused before commencing prayer, and also respecting the rapidity of his utterance in prayer after he had commenced, which rendered it difficult for the congregation to follow him ;— replied, that in the one case, it was owing to the deep and overwhelming impression upon his mind of God's greatness and glory ; and in the other, that after commencing praying, his views of the divine attributes were so clear and overpowering, that he could not do otherwise than to proceed with a rapid utterance. He probably became so quickened in his conceptions and emotions in this exercise, that with the Psalmist he could say, "My soul followeth *hard* after Thee."

His prayers were, unquestionably, the most peculiarly striking of any of his public performances. No wonder that they drew forth the remark of the stranger, who once listened to them, "That if some other ministers might *preach* better, no one could *pray* like Payson."

It seemed indeed, during these exercises, that the fountains of the great "deep within him were broken up ;" as the overflowing waters suffused, with a holy baptism, the prostrate assembly. Never more distinctly to our view than then, was seen the insufferable splendor of the Eternal throne, and Him who sat thereon. The hallelujahs of the redeemed, and the wailings of the lost, came in joyful or fearful echoes upon the heart, in all their dread reality.

In his prayers there was the least possible formality, and yet an almost endless variety. He was not in favor, at least in his own practice, of the frequent introduction of quotations from scripture into his prayers, which is often a mere effort of memory, and which, for want of feeling is sometimes substituted for the aspirations of the heart. It was from no want of respect for the Scriptures, but from an apprehension, that such a practice did not fully answer the design of prayer, and would lead to a formality in the exercise, that he did not adopt it in his own case. He had always a special errand at the throne of grace. He was in earnest about it, and so he prayed. Not merely because prayer was a duty that he must not omit, or that the time of prayer had come, or because it was comely, or expected, but from an impressive sense of his own and his people's necessities, dependence and obligations. He seemed to hear God saying "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

The blessings bestowed, in answer to his prayers, upon himself, his congregation, and the world, we can easily conceive must be manifold. He looked for an *answer* to his prayers. If there was a cloud seen, he watched it. How much he was indebted to prayer for his own growth in grace, and for the success of his labors, is very evident. Nor is it contrary to Philosophy or the Bible, or observation, to believe, that prayer is one important means of increasing the capabilities of the mind, as well as of purifying the affections. Here, probably, was one secret of his extraordinary power—a constant intercourse with Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," which could not fail to bring down into the soul, a goodly portion of the heavenly gifts.



If prayer is the key that unlocks the treasures of the Infinite mind, what an incentive is hereby presented to avail ourselves of this privilege. If employed to such advantage in Dr. Payson's case ; possessing such noble gifts of nature as he did, how valuable the precedent for others, especially for those who are preparing for the ministry, or newly in it, both for their own benefit, and that of others. We are directed not only to "covet the best gifts," by study and application, but to look to Him "from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift," for the gift itself, and the grace which sanctifieth the gift.

How may the "feeblest become as David," who seek for strength and wisdom from above. The true "unction from the Holy One," is what the minister of Christ specially needs. With it, comes the *tact*, that helps him in all emergencies to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," that makes him the wise and successful minister, and which constitutes much of the difference between one minister and another. If ever a man was helped of God, it was Payson. The Spirit was largely poured out upon him. Had he possessed but one talent, it would have been enlarged by grace. If so "in that which is least," even in the one-talented man, so was it in "that which is much," in his case,—who thereby added to his noble portion "other *ten* talents."

Some of his prayers were so peculiar in their character, that they have been remembered through the lapse of many years. Dr. Cummings mentions one offered on the occasion of La Fayette's expected presence at Dr. Payson's church, which so struck the mind of a lady present, that she requested of him a copy. A few other instances have come to our knowledge. A lady

from Massachusetts related to the compiler the following particulars of a Sabbath service he performed, while on a visit at T——, some thirty years since. It is worthy of mention by way of confirmation of the general opinion respecting his prayers.

“Prayers,” said the lady, “had been publicly requested for a sick child. Dr. Payson prayed very earnestly, and for a long time for the life of the child. All at once he stopped, and said, “O Lord we know not whether we are asking for a blessing or a curso. He then continued to pray that the sick child might become a child of God, whether living or dying. The child recovered; although its subsequent history is not known.

Writes a correspondent, “Dr. Payson was remarkable for his faith and prayerfulness. At an ordination which he attended, he suggested the idea of spending the whole night before the ordination in prayer. One of the clerical members assented to the proposal, and although the measure was not adopted, the suggestion indicated the spirit of the author.”

He was once sent for, to preside at a meeting of a church in a neighboring town, called for the purpose of settling a difficulty among them of long standing, and which had occasioned much trouble in the church. His remarks, and especially his appeals to the throne of Grace, were so earnest and simple and affecting, that they melted the church; the difficulties on both sides vanished, and all were at one again. He had “power with God and with man, and prevailed.”

His prayers offered at occasional meetings, both at home and abroad, are still remembered and adverted to, with a degree of interest that I have never heard ex-

pressed respecting the prayers of any other man. The following anecdote illustrates the remark just made.

A Portland gentleman being in England, and in company with an Englishman, happened to speak of the place where he hailed from. Portland ? Portland ? said the Englishman, are you from there ? Yes. Is that Payson alive yet ? Why, what of him ? Ah, said he, I was present in his church at the funeral of the commanders of the Boxer and Enterprise, who fell in the engagement off Portland, in the war of 1813, and heard the prayer which Payson offered on the occasion. Never shall I forget that prayer !

Recall to mind the peculiar position in which Dr. P. was placed on the occasion ; the fact of two great nations still at war ; the gallant commanders, both of whom had fought valiantly and fell ; fresh in their death wounds, shrouded in their country's flags, in an American church, and in the presence of American citizens, and the officers and crews of both national vessels, with feelings of hostility still reigning in their bosoms ; in one party, the joy of recent triumph, in the other, the chagrin of defeat ; the act of sepulture to be performed in accordance with the usages of honorable war ; a respectful regard to be observed for the feelings of all present, both friend and foe, and the whole a religious service. Under all these complicated and most trying circumstances, where could the man be found, whose mind was equal to conceive a prayer suited to so extraordinary an occasion ; a prayer that should prove acceptable to God, and to the members of that large, promiscuous congregation, couched in language, and uttered with a freedom and solemnity which would befit a scene so awfully solemn and imposing ; and which was remembered with the deepest inter-

est by friend and foe after a lapse of forty years. Dr Payson was the man. He met the emergency, for he was equal to it. He saw the difficulty, the embarrassment, the complexity of the service he had to perform, and at a very short notice. He remarked that he knew not how he should succeed, but he must go forward, and leave the result with God.

One of the most striking features of his public prayer, was the acknowledgment of his dependence, and great unworthiness. This was so apparent, that it excited the wonder of all, especially of strangers. Others might make use of similar confessions of guilt in their prayers, but their language seemed not to bear the same import as when uttered by him. There accompanied the words from his lips, the unmistakable evidence of the deepest feeling, a feeling "which hypocrites could ne'er attain." He employed such confessions of sin as often surprised those who were present, and which sometimes awakened the suspicion that there must have been some obliquity in his life, known only to God and himself. His letters and diary abound in the same humiliating expressions respecting himself; yet his is not a singular case. The prayers and writings of the most eminent saints, have abounded in the same peculiarity. It is seen in some of the most striking hymns of Watts, Cowper, Newton and others. What deep mourning over the remains of an unsanctified nature, what ardent aspirations after sanctification, are there exhibited. From the time of Augustine and Calvin, down through successive ages, are found many examples of men eminent in learning and piety, who were of a kindred spirit with Payson in this respect. And must the peculiarity in Dr. Payson's prayers be accounted as foolishness, or weakness, or as



owing to a distorted view of God's character, seen through a false medium? Especially, we ask, was it to be attributed to a deranged or diseased nervous system—a state bordering on insanity? Many, who knew not the man, have been very willing to assign such a cause. They settle the point, as they suppose, and by one sweeping argument—the excited state of his nerves. Never was an opinion more false, a suspicion more groundless, an insinuation more cruel. That he was excitable on this subject, and most tenderly alive to every thing that related to personal religion, we do not deny; but his people never saw any mark of insanity, or approach to it, during all the scenes of his twenty years' labors. In the view of some, wholly incompetent to judge in the matter, he might be said to be “beside himself;” the Apostle before him, was so misjudged, when pleading in his Master's defence. Blessed Saints! ye are safe from the intrusion or the reproach of a misjudging world.

With regard to the self-condemning remarks he so often made in his prayers, it is not necessary to suppose him to be a notorious sinner, or a man with nerves diseased or all unstrung. Can it not be accounted for upon principles sound in logic, and true to Scripture? Were not such views of himself, as expressed in his prayers, the legitimate deductions of a sound intellect, and acute apprehension of the requirements of the Divine law? Were they not the convictions of his mind in view of his want of conformity to that perfect standard?

That it would be more gratifying to man's pride and self-righteousness, and a more convenient method of palliating or passing over his guilt, to attribute his fail-



ures in obedience to "natural infirmity," and thus to escape the condemnation of that law which takes cognizance of the least irregular desire, or emotion of the heart, no less than the overt transgression, cannot be questioned. Dr. Payson sought no such subterfuge. He would not have the Divine standard lowered to meet the selfish desires of a depraved nature; rather he would adopt the sentiments of the Psalmist;—

"And should thy sentence grow severe,  
I am condemn'd, but Thou art clear;  
And should my soul be sent to hell,  
Thy righteous law approves it well."

The same posture of mind to which he would lead the sinner, in order to hope for his acceptance with God, he viewed as the most suitable place for himself; and the prayer of the publican, would be his, (although safe in Christ,) to his dying day. No one more than he, knew the efficacy of a Saviour's blood; no one preached the doctrine of justification by faith more freely, or with more distinctness than he did; no one more than he, viewed himself safe under that robe which Christ had wrought for believers; no one could exult more in the sentiment that "there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," yet he knew, in his own case, that that robe covered a poor sinner, who had often to exclaim in view of remaining sin, "Oh, wretched man that I am," or "my sin is ever before me."

With Dr. Payson, nothing but the possession of a sincere endeavor after perfect conformity to the whole law, in its minutest or most extensive requirements, could satisfy him; and every failure in this respect, convicted

him of guilt in God's sight. This sense of guilt constituted the burden of his soul ; why are we to wonder that it was so frequently the burden of his prayers ?

It is obvious to every experienced christian that such a sense of unworthiness, when felt, and humbly confessed to God, by faith in the great Mediator, instead of diminishing his usefulness or his christian joy, does only increase the former and heighten the latter. "When Paul was a Pharisee he thought he was blameless ; when he was a christian, the chief of sinners ; *before* — any thing but Christ ; *now* — none but Christ."

"I glory in infirmity,

That Christ's own power may rest on me."

Dr. Payson could weep over his sins and yet rejoice in a view of Christ through his tears. Christ was all and in all to him. All our past reflections upon his character will be a sufficient guarantee against any insinuation that there was anything of an antinomian spirit, either in his preaching or practice. He was no Pharisee, nor did he "make Christ the minister of sin." Nor did the possession of sad views of unworthiness, have the least unhealthy practical tendency, but the reverse. "Cast down, but not destroyed." His vileness in his own sight, did not shake his hope. "Just as I am, I come to thee," governed him in his personal experience, and that language contained the principle he adopted in all his addresses to the impenitent, or the awakened backslider. We are brought by the fairest inference to believe that he must have instituted for himself a higher standard of judgment, and that he had clearer views of the holiness of God, and of the moral distance between him and hi

Creator, than most others. Possessing such views, he could not but see himself to be exceedingly sinful. His prayers could not but be in accordance with such views. None but the truly penitent can offer the prayer of penitence. He only who has a sense of his delinquencies can be a penitent. He only who is of a humble and contrite spirit, and desires to be pure in heart, and who feels his slow and imperfect advances towards such a state, will understand why Dr. Payson prayed as he did ; and all such will find in Dr. Payson's experience a counterpart to their own, to his prayers a response in their own bosom ; and we believe that in God's judgment, the prayers of such will never be attributed to insanity or nervousness, and not more in Dr. Payson's case than in theirs. It is not every one who in his spiritual experience is compelled to cry out with the Psalmist " Deep calleth unto deep, all thy waves and billows are gone over me ;" and none but such can judge rightly of Dr. Payson's case.

It is said, he once remarked to another, while suffering some signal spiritual encounter with the powers of darkness, that he had " experienced the agonies of crucifixion." This expression would doubtless seem extravagant and hyperbolical to a christian of but ordinary temptations ; but few could understand it. Dr. Payson's experience was of no ordinary kind ; trials like his, but few have had to endure. Probably, since the days of Job, two more signal marks have not been set up for the fiery darts of the great " accuser of the brethren," than Luther and Payson ; perhaps we may except John Bunyan. Hard pressures from God's hand ; deep arrows with coals

of juniper" from Satan's malice, and the remarkable Divine support under them, or deliverance from them, have all combined to constitute these deeply marked christian characters.

## CHAPTER V.

His manner of reading the psalm or hymn.—Description of the effect produced upon the hearers.—General remarks upon the importance of this part of divine service, as a means of grace.—Description of a scene in Rev. Dr. Spencer's conference-room, by way of illustration.

IN the performance of this part of the pulpit service, Dr. Payson so eminently excelled, that we deem it worthy of special notice. Speak to any of his old hearers on this subject, even at this day, and the most vivid reminiscences are awakened. The emotions of that hour when they hung upon their pastor's lips, come up again in all their freshness. Advert to some particular hymn he used to read, and they exclaim "O, how he would read that hymn; we shall never forget it, while we can remember any thing."

There were some hymns, which owing to their peculiarly elevated character, either in style or sentiment, he read more frequently than others. These he pronounced with surprising effect.

"Belknap's Collection" was then used in his congregation, and there were some choice hymns in it, by Mrs. Steele, Dr. Doddridge and others. They who attended upon his early ministry scarcely need to be reminded of them.



We hope the general reader will pardon us, if for the gratification of Dr. Payson's personal friends we refer to a few of them. One of them is the 4th hymn in Worcester's selection.

"Keep silence all created things,  
And wait your Maker's nod ;  
My soul stands trembling, while she sings  
The honors of her God,"

The sentiments of every line were justly conceived by Dr. Payson, and uttered with corresponding emotions. He threw a meaning into the language that we but imperfectly perceived or understood until they fell from his lips. When he described any thing, you more than saw, you felt it too.

In personating Shakspeare's characters, Garrick might have displayed superior art or power ; but that sense of the Divine Presence, and deep prostration of spirit, which Payson possessed, would be lacking in the great tragedian. With all his mimic art, should he attempt to read a hymn for public worship, he would entirely fail to produce that impression which he alone produces, who feels his subject, as Dr. Payson did.

Mere human passions, the most hidden and powerful of the heart, can be portrayed by the magic pen of the adroit novelist, and exhibited to great perfection by one who has been trained to represent human character upon the stage. Into all man's mere natural feelings, he can enter and be at home in portraying them, but the guise could not fail to be detected, were he to attempt to "show off" such emotions as have been sublimated in a heart touched by the grace of God. Some part of Whitefield's

peculiarly impressive manner, it is said, Garrick could successfully imitate; but there was the eloquence of sound feeling in the preacher, which the highest effort of the histrionic art could never counterfeit. The Apostle explains the enigma:—"For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;" or as the poet has it,

"The devils fear and tremble too,  
But satan cannot love."

Could the author of the hymn himself have listened to the stanza we just now quoted, as usually read by Dr. Payson, he would have been surprised at the fulness of meaning, and the impressiveness of his own language. We seem to see, at this moment, the man of God, as he stood up before the assembly pronouncing the hymn; his own mind entirely absorbed with its inspiring sentiments, while he seemed literally "to stand trembling," especially when repeating the *third* line. His voice in sweet symphony with the sublimity of the song, and his soul elevated to the highest pitch of devotion; an involuntary shuddering came over us, while listening to one who seemed in the presence of the splendor of the eternal throne. The same thrilling effect pervaded the reading of the entire hymn, with but little abatement to the close.

Another hymn which he often read, was that commencing with the lines,

"Eternal Power, whose high abode,  
Becomes the grandeur of a God."

Here, too, he seemed caught up to the third heavens, himself, and his hearers with him.

The hymn contemplates the infinite greatness of Jehovah, while the speaker, himself, absorbed in the grandeur of the theme, seemed to shrink into his own nothingness, a worm, in the presence of Infinite Majesty. The audience were often completely electrified by his thrilling tones. It is remarkable, that at every repetition of the hymn, the same effect was invariably produced. The climax was complete when he concluded the hymn with the following stanza :

“ God is in heaven, and men below,  
Be short our hymns, our words be few ;  
A solemn reverence checks our songs,  
And praise is silent on our tongues.”

The Lord God appeared on a “ throne, high and lifted up.” You saw that he felt the disparity between all created beings and Him who was the occupant of that throne. Intuitively he seemed to feel, “ Be short our hymns, our words be few,” as if a prolongation of the exercise were little short of blasphemy, and that in performing it, he had only been “ darkening counsel.” A “ solemn reverence ” checked the song, as the words dropped tremblingly from his lips, bespeaking the sentiment that it were almost presumptuous for a vile worm to attempt the Great Creator’s praise, as he pronounced the closing line,

“ And praise is *silent* on our tongues.”

While thus with solemn cadence, and in tones of subdued emotion, scarcely audible, he himself seemed impressed with reverential awe, the whole prostrate congregation in deep sympathy with the pastor, were

called to witness a scene of such intense interest, as is seldom presented to an assembly of mortals. It was then "holy ground," if any spot on earth could be. The wonder is, that after such an impression had been made upon the congregation, those who had been appointed to lead the song, could have sufficiently recovered themselves from their electrified embarrassment, to commence their work. The solemn stillness of the moment seemed to suggest that it was more befitting that human voices should be hushed, and that the spontaneous wish of every heart would be in sympathy with that beautiful and appropriate line of the poet,

"Come, then, expressive silence, *muse* His praise."

The value of time, even of a moment, never seemed so important; the worth of the soul and the danger of neglecting its salvation was never more deeply felt, than when he repeated the hymn of Doddridge,

"O time, how few thy value weigh,  
How few will estimate a day;  
Days, months and years are rolling on,  
The soul neglected and undone."

The hymn is a sermon of itself, when read by any one; but as repeated by him, it came down with most fearful emphasis upon the conscience of the neglecter of his soul; and a most stirring appeal it was to the christian who is called upon to work while the day lasts.

These instances are but specimens. An interest somewhat similar was awakened when he repeated any piece of devotional poetry.

We will mention one other hymn, which in its portrayal of the heavenly rest, seemed to picture out his grand idea of heaven upon earth—the Sabbath and its worship. It is one of Doddridge's.

“Thine earthly Sabbath Lord, we love ;  
But there's a nobler rest above.”

Heaven did indeed shine in his holy countenance, while he seemed filled to overflowing with the bright vision of anticipated glory, as he closed with the following :

“ No more fatigue, no more distress,  
Nor death, nor sin. shall reach the place,  
No groans shall mingle with the songs  
That warble from immortal tongues.”

With all his deep experience of the soul struggling with sin, and encumbered with the ills of mortality, coupled with his strong faith, and in the anticipation of his “bright reversion in the skies,” it is easy to see how he would enter into the spirit of these lines, and with what wonderful effect he would pronounce them. He made us to see the halo of glory encompassing the rest of heaven, and which reflected its light and love upon the Sabbath rest which we were so imperfectly celebrating, and which, though but a type, often proved to us a precious and striking emblem of the heavenly rest. But few have made a Sabbath and its privileges tell more emphatically upon spiritual enjoyment than did Dr. Payson, both by his prayers and preaching ; and the part of divine service to which we refer had its full share in producing this happy result.



With respect to the effect which his manner of reading the hymn had upon the minds of his audience we may adduce the following anecdote.

Said the Rev. Mr. T., a respectable minister of Maine, "The first time I ever heard Dr. Payson was at Newburyport, in Dr. Spring's Church. I was then but seven years old, yet I never shall forget how his reading the hymn affected me. I remember the hymn. It was that commencing as follows:

"Praise, everlasting praise be paid  
To Him, who earth's foundations laid."

I then neither knew nor cared anything about religion, but after the lapse of thirty years, the impression which the reading of the hymn produced, is as distinct on my mind as ever." Here is another instance, corroborative of the fact—and no less as being the testimony of a child—that not only "no man *prayed* like Payson," but that seldom was one found who could read a hymn with equal effect. Nor was there anything in this performance that appeared studied or artificial, although he possessed a voice of great power and richness of intonation, remarkably well adapted to an effective utterance. The grand secret of his power lay in the depth of feeling, which gave to the various sentiments of the hymn, an emphasis and a significancy peculiarly his own. It was the naturalness of a heart-utterance. The sentiments of moral beauty or sublimity, contained in the hymn, he transfused into the minds of his audience. The eye, the voice, the emotions of the speaker portrayed upon the minds of his hearers, the picture, living and fresh from his own conceptions. It is there to this day.

Although the primary, perhaps the most prominent use of church psalmody, is to awaken and elevate devotional feeling, we think that this is not its exclusive design or result. The act of *reading* the hymn, as well as the *singing* of it, may subserve the object for which the general performance is introduced in our congregations, and may prove as effectual a means of grace as the same amount of truth would be, conveyed to the minds of the audience by any other method. Examples abound, where the reading of the hymn has been the means of producing conviction, or allaying mental anguish, and of affording spiritual comfort to the desponding believer.

The advantage which poetry has over prose, in producing an impression, and a more abiding impression, is universally acknowledged. Accompanied by music, its power is doubtless increased; yet we believe that the effect so frequently produced upon the sensibilities by some national air or popular ballad, or by the soul-inspiring melody of the sea-song, which gives animation to the sailor as he heaves at the windlass, or which beguiles the long, lone months of the foreign voyage, arises generally from the sentiment of the song, rather than the mere modulation of sounds which accompanies them. Nor is the effect produced by certain popular and stirring melodies used in the more private meetings of some denominations of christians, to be ascribed wholly to the music, but in considerable part to the simple, yet beautiful and evangelic thoughts which they contain. The bare pronouncing of some hymns often produces a similar effect. The following incident is in point, and illustrates our views as it respects the reading of the hymn.

Dr. Spencer of Brooklyn, New York, relates the following in his sketches recently published.

“ A young lady under conviction of sin, being present at one of his conference meetings, the Paster read the hymn of Dr. Watts, closing with the following stanza :

“ A guilty, weak and helpless worm,  
On thy kind arm I fall,  
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,  
My Jesus and my all ! ”

After meeting, said she to the pastor, “ I sat all the time *looking at that hymn*, and I have been thinking of it ever since. I did not hear a word of your prayer or sermon. I do not know your text, I thought of nothing but that *hymn*.” I left her, says Dr. Spencer, to the direction of the Holy Spirit, and the *truth of that hymn*.” It was probably, the means of her conversion.

In connection with the foregoing, we beg leave to add a few remarks, touching a kindred subject.

It is well known that psalms and hymns, partaking of a didactic, or doctrinal character, or relating to christian experience, are sometimes objected to, as being unsuitable for public worship. In some of the collections of church Psalmody, used at the present day, the minister looks for many of those good old fashioned psalms and hymns, which relate to the doctrine of original sin, and innate depravity ; God’s anger against the wicked, and other kindred subjects. The reason adduced for this omission, on the part of the compilers of psalmody, we believe to be that such hymns are not suitable to be sung in public worship. It is their opinion, *merely* ; we think, an erroneous one. We hope the objection does not arise from the peculiar character of the *sentiments* contained in them. Upon many minds, the effect produced by the

singing of those solemn truths, is invariably good. That such hymns should be excluded, or so seldom selected to be read from the pulpit, is a matter of surprise and regret. If poetry, especially sacred poetry, is a medium through which truth may be successfully conveyed to the mind, we are at a loss to understand why the omission just alluded to, should so extensively prevail. We know not where to look for the authority by which such a course has been adopted; nor can we discover the good taste, which has so uncerimoniously mutilated such hymns, and in some cases slighted them altogether. We have the same fault to find with the modern practice of rejecting tunes of the minor key, in public worship.

There are always in a christian assembly, those who have come up to the house of God, with hearts saddened by grief; and it is true now, as in Solomon's day, that "As vinegar upon nitre, so is he who singeth *songs* to an heavy heart." The plaintive air, is sure to meet the sympathies of such hearts; to soothe "the sorrowful soul," to comfort God's people is, certainly, a part of the design of church music, and, as we think, such a style better answers that object, than any approach to the evil foretold by the prophet, that "the songs of the temple, shall become *howlings* in those days."

The minister too, becomes very sensitive on this subject, and justly so. He is often compelled to witness the sad discrepancy between the tune, and his subject, together with the *manner* in which the tune is sometimes sung. The desired result of his prayers and preaching is not only not realized, but entirely defeated. His audience feels it, and he feels it more than they. He is sometimes unfitted to proceed in his work, because of



the ignorance, or carelessness, or want of taste, in those who select the tune. Hence, what was intended to be a means of grace, a help to the minister, and to the devotions of the congregation, has passed off for what is worse than nothing. The subject, is certainly, worthy of attention by all who are in any way connected with this department of public worship.

The psalmody in present use, having among its contributors such men as Watts, and Doddridge, and Newton and Cowper, is a rich legacy to the church. Their memory must always be precious in the department of lyric poetry. In it, is embodied, the soundest divinity, and in it is depicted every form and shade of religious experience; affording to the Christian, the sunshine of joy, sympathy and hope, under the darkest cloud; in temptation's dangerous hour, the rescue.

If such hymns are found useful in the parlor and in the closet, so will they be in the house of God. As Dr. Payson employed it, it became in his hands a powerful influence for good. As in his case, so in all other instances the people may see that the author and the reader of the hymn mean something; and much depends upon the manner it is enunciated.

And if we might be allowed to say one word to those who lead the song, allow us to say, that knowing as they do their power, to increase the effect of public worship, they should take pains to compass so desirable an object.

We remember to have listened to the performance of a small, yet very select and scientific choir, in singing a hymn of Dr. Watts; and no preaching we ever heard, has produced a more overpowering and subduing effect. It was the hymn, commencing with,

“Life is the time to serve the Lord.”



## RECOLLECTIONS OF PAYSON.

We never heard the "ruin and despair" of the lost sinner more feelingly described, or had it more clearly depicted upon our own mind ; or the necessity of "seizing the promise, while it waits ;" or when, in notes of solemn intonation, and as if they themselves were viewing the awful scene described in the hymn, with "hell uncovered" before them, they sang the closing lines,

"But darkness, death and long despair,  
Reign in eternal silence there."

Singers might become preachers if they would ; if they knew their power, and used it with taste and judgment, accompanied with deep feeling.

The effect which the hymn, sung at the conclusion of the communion service, has upon the assembly is often adverted to, as being exceedingly solemn ; an effect probably produced by the union of the excellent sentiments of the hymn, the character of the performers, and the peculiar interest of the occasion.

## CHAPTER VI.

His effectiveness as a Preacher.—His respect for the Ministerial office.—His respect for his people.—His self-respect.—Reference to contemporary preachers

Highly and justly as his qualities as a preacher have been extolled, we confess we have never heard them overrated.

If we felt our incompetency to present an accurate idea of the pulpit power of Dr. Payson, when we were listening to his living eloquence as it lingered yet fresh and vivid upon our memory amid those precious “Sabbath-scenes;” the difficulty must be increased, now that that tongue is silent in death, and the lapse of more than thirty years has served in a measure to dim those impressions.

His constant hearers, who are to be considered the only competent judges in this matter, have never been willing, neither then nor now, to admit, that he had any equal as a preacher. We say then nor now, for we have not yet found the man, who had once listened to him who refuses to join in this general acknowledgment. In this opinion they are unanimous and immovable. No lapse of time; no change of circumstances; no subsequent acquaintance with other preachers, has led them to change their views in this respect. And this they say, with no disrespect to, or any disparagement of, his most worthy contemporaries or successors in the ministry.

Nor was it a small gratification to us, that strangers who occasionally heard him were seized with the same conviction, that had settled upon our own minds. This fact, made us more strong and secure in our cherished partialities. It was an endorsement and a testimony which did but augment our confidence in the correctness of our judgment.

And yet it is with reluctance that we offer our opinion on this particular subject. His friends have not escaped reproach for having done so ; yet the incredulity of many of the present generation, compels us even “ to glory in men ; ” not so much on his account, as to bring the burden of proof to bear honestly and legitimately upon the subject ; in a word, to maintain and defend our position, against the incredulous.

We proceed to remark, first, that there was an absence of all levity in Dr. Payson’s manner in the pulpit. No smile, or approach to it, was ever seen on his countenance while there, nor do we remember of his ever having provoked a smile upon the countenances of his hearers. There was no tediousness or satiety experienced by those who listened to him, however prolonged might be the exercises, and down to the last Sabbath-day’s services of his life. Christians left the house of God, still hungering for the bread of life.

It is true that the impenitent felt the offensiveness of his doctrines, and the mighty power of his appeals, yet would they come again and again, that they might open their bosoms, to the mysteriously fascinating, though unwelcome and hated truths.

Invariably would the countenances of the retiring congregation evince the deep emotions which his discourse had awakened.

We seem even now to hear the exclamation, as we used to hear it, as his people came from the church, from one and another, "was there ever such a preacher before: surely this is the most wonderful sermon yet."

We are not able to state what preparation he made for his extempore discourses. They were probably, well studied, for he invariably appeared to be master of his subject, let the occasion be what it might. Everything needful for the occasion, was perfectly under his control; matter, voice, language, logic and imagination.

We could not discover that he had any notes whatever before him. He read his text from the pulpit-bible, which remained open before him, at which, he would occasionally direct his eye, either mechanically or for convenience, to recollect his next topic of remark, or possibly to catch a glimpse of the paper that might lie before him. Then was the flame of his eloquence re-kindled, and his whole soul under its mighty influence would beam forth with indescribable solemnity, to irradiate, to melt and to captivate his enraptured audience. We repeat, that the intense interest which he awakened, never flagged, from the commencement to the close of his discourse: his pulpit services often went on with an increasing power to the last, forming a well adjusted, well-balanced climax.

He never made shipwreck, or grounded even. His sails never seemed to lose their wind, nor the helm its controlling power. The breeze was always propitious, so far as we could judge. True he has recorded in his diary, what he might suppose a defeat or discomfiture in the pulpit, but his hearers were never aware of such a thing.

## CHAPTER VII.

Dr. Payson's mental powers and resources.—Literary habits.—His great popularity as a preacher sometimes disputed.—Defence.—The cordial reception he met with on his journeys.—The opinion of judicious men with regard to his talents.—In what his intellectual pre-eminence consisted.—The extraordinary influence accompanying his religious performances.

We feel our incompetency to give a perfect description of the capacity and furniture of Dr. Payson's mind. It was of great amplitude and depth, and richly furnished.

As one, who stands upon the shore of an immense ocean, may admire what his limited vision can discern, although he must leave unexplored that portion which lies beyond it, so we may contemplate a portion of his noble mind, although much will remain undiscovered, unfathomed and untold.

We do not expect to impart to those of our readers, who were not personally acquainted with Dr. Payson, the same impression of his excellencies as lies upon our own mind, nor do we expect fully to be understood by them when we make the attempt. Other eyes cannot see with ours, nor can they who have never heard him, judge as we judge; nor will any representations we can make give that impression, which could only be received while



sitting under the magic power of his eloquence. All tell you this. The spectator of some grand object in nature, such, for example, as the falls of Niagara, is impressed with an idea of its grandeur, which he shall be unable to convey to those who have not witnessed it; yet may he be fully accredited for the truthfulness of the description. We ask only the same indulgence from those who are unacquainted with Dr. Payson. Although we fail to give them an impression as vivid as our own, yet, may we also be accredited for the sincerity of our opinion, and the truthfulness of our representation, as being in accordance with our own convictions.

“Error,” remarks one, “is a snake that needs much killing.” We add, prejudice is a tortoise that lives after its head is cut off.

The remark is very general, that Dr. Payson’s popularity and success, as a preacher, are to be chiefly attributed to his uncommon piety, and the solemnity of his pulpit manner. We do not blush for Dr. P.’s piety, nor hesitate to admit that the grace of God did exceedingly heighten and improve all his other ministerial gifts; and that piety in any preacher, is absolutely essential; yet if the remark under consideration is intended to convey an insinuation, that, superadded to an ardent piety, Dr. Payson did not possess intellectual powers of a very high order, the remark is deserving of the most unqualified condemnation. It must have arisen either from prejudice, envy, or ignorance. In compassion for the frailty of our common nature, we choose to attribute it to the latter.

No one could have listened to him during the delivery of a single sermon, without being impressed with the conviction, that he had been listening, not only to a good,

but to a great man. A single discourse or prayer, told unmistakably the story of his vast pulpit power; and there can be no true pulpit power, where there is not something in the *mind* of the speaker for its basis and support. Mere voice or sound, or a solemn demeanor is not sufficient. His constant hearers were immovable in their convictions of the truth of our position, and among them, men in the several learned professions, of clear and sound judgment. Strangers of high distinction, who occasionally heard him, went away, more than satisfied with the report of his fame. It is in a subsequent generation, that those are found, who, never having heard him, are strangely incredulous in this matter.

The question has been put to us, "In what did the greatness of Dr. Payson's mind consist? Or in what respect was he a *great* man? We saw that the question was captious, the offspring of suspicion or unbelief. To give an off-hand reply, such as to satisfy our own mind or the mind of the inquirer, would be difficult. The present volume, we hope, will answer the question satisfactorily.

In considering the question of his intellectual ability, we have no other motive than to testify to the truth in the case. When a man's character is brought before the public, they expect more than a one-sided view of it; and certainly they ought not to be put off, with a false view of it. His piety shone brightly indeed; this speaks well for his heart. A giant-power of intellect accompanied and directed it, giving it a character and influence of no ordinary kind, seen and acknowledged by all fair and competent judges. An English clergyman said to the compiler "we in England think very highly of Dr. Payson."

He was remarkable for a vivid and well-trained imagination. He originated in his own mind, or caught from external objects, with great facility, whatever images were needed to illustrate his subject. Especially was this the case in his extemporaneous effusions. He combined and arranged, and applied with wonderful clearness all his elements of illustration, drawn from nature, from history and biography, or from the well-springs of his own mind.

His own feelings would be set on fire by the very conceptions themselves, in the process of elaboration, and springing fresh from his mind, would blaze out upon his hearers in a sheet of flame. There seemed to be no exhausting of his mental resources. Every occasion and topic would lend new inspiration to his genius.

In describing human character, especially the operations of the heart, or what related to religious experience, he had not to draw from the observation or experience of others, as is the practice of many, although for variety of illustration he would sometimes quote the sayings of his favorite authors. Bunyan, Newton, Brainard, and others, eminent for their spiritual trials and conflicts. He had only to dip his pencil in his own lacerated bosom, in its sad and dreadful workings, under the sorrows of the present hour, or musing upon the memories of the past, and, as it were, to spread upon the canvass with his own heart's blood, the dark shade of the soul's deepest night; or regaining the smiles of God's reconciled countenance, to portray the sun-light of revived hope in flushing beauty, in happy and striking contrast.

The amplitude and brilliancy of his genius were more conspicuous in his extemporaneous productions. The printed volume, from which the judgment of the public

has been formed, on this subject, does not tell the whole truth in this respect. To judge aright of his complete intellectual stature, it is necessary to behold a full-length portrait of him ; and such a view could be obtained only when listening to him as an extempore speaker. The sermons which he merely *read* from the pulpit, although specimens of no ordinary talent, did not exhibit his full power.

The world did not know Dr. Payson. It knew not of his vast intellectual resources, yet unexplored or undeveloped. His natural modesty, and reserve, concealed much of what lay hidden from the public eye. He told not all he felt ; he made no parade of what he knew. "There is a way which the vulture's eye hath not seen." Although such frequent calls were made upon his mental resources, and however ample the expenditure during a ministry of twenty years, yet there were, doubtless, in a mind of such originality and extent, veins of intellectual gold which had not yet been struck upon.

In making our estimate of the capacity of Dr. Payson's mind, we do not by any means intend to slight, or undervalue the criterion afforded us in his published writings. In his volumes of sermons, and especially, in his "Thoughts," and others of his printed works, there is not only no lack of proof of a great and original mind, but the most conclusive evidence of it. We open a volume of his sermons now, and we are carried back to the place and to the hour when we first listened to them. His heart, which we saw bleeding at every pore, when he spoke to us, and prayed with us, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from house to house, we now seem to see in his published discourses, laid open afresh, as it were, and in its quivering and undying throbs. All of



the man and of the affectionate pastor, is still exhibited there.

There was not only truth, of vast weight and importance, in his written sermons, but it was presented in accurate and logical arrangement, with fine taste, and deep eloquence of thought and expression. Impartial and able judges, who are acquainted with his writings, concur in this opinion.

Not less did the same qualities, in matter and style, abound in his extemporaneous effusions. It is in the power of but few men, to speak with that conciseness, order, and precision, with which he did in his unwritten pulpit performances. This fact affords another proof of great and uncommon talent; an evidence, not only of a full and capacious mind, but of a mind in which every power was well disciplined, and ready for use. Thus it was that the fair copy which had flowed from his pen by a course of elaboration in his study, left the mould undisturbed and entire, prepared to present another copy when occasion should require it, unincumbered with written characters. He adopted this course of preaching, alternately, written and unwritten sermons, that he might become at once a ready speaker, and a correct speaker; both methods yielding mutual aid to each other in forming the character of an efficient and profitable speaker. He would bring circumstance and logic, love to souls, and the "powers of the world to come," with all the ornament and armament of a well-stored and well-disciplined mind, to bear upon the conscience and heart of his hearers.

If his written sermons were the heavy ordnance, his extemporary effusions were the flying artillery, that swiftly and surely carried consternation and death into



the ranks of the enemy. Of this latter description were his sermons on the Sabbath morning, and his Thursday evening lectures.

#### DR. PAYSON'S INTERIOR LIFE.

To give a full and accurate description of this, is beyond the limits of our power. It is a "fountain sealed," which forbids every intrusive approach. To delineate his intellectual powers is a work sufficiently difficult; to enter his soul's chambers of imagery, to survey and measure the glowing pictures of his fancy, there created, is even more difficult. This, however, we may do and admire:—admire the genius and the grace combined, which brought forth from the treasures of his heart, not only "good things," but great things, happily intermingled, reflecting their light upon each other, and throwing a charm over every subject that employed his lips or his pen. But it is more difficult still, if not sacrilegious, to enter within the domain of spiritual emotion and examine the hidden sources of his heart's joys and sorrows. That sacred enclosure was *God's room*, the place of his manifested presence and glory. There he held sweet intercourse with his Savior.

In the recesses of his heart there were struggles as well as victories of no common kind. We saw the upheavings of the ocean in the outer life, of which we may speak; we beheld only its surface, the color of its waters, the crest upon its billows, or the spray of the broken wave; but of the hidden springs far below the surface, as we said, how shall we venture to speak? The record which he himself has made of the alternations of hope and fear, doubtless was not intended for the public

gaze ; and yet, with good judgment, from the purest motives, and for the spiritual benefit of others, as well as to magnify the grace of God, they have been recorded upon the printed page. Of this we shall speak more at length elsewhere.

At this remote period, and distinctly before our minds, are vividly pictured the scenes of the happy years, which we enjoyed under his ministry. Time has not obliterated, but rather given distinctness to the impression.

They come to us, sometimes, as a beautiful dream of the night ; yea, not unfrequently are we listening to our pastor's pathetic appeals. While our senses are locked in slumber, the soul is in the enjoyment of the beauteous and unforgotten realities of those days ; the heart feels as then, the subduing eloquence, and memory reverts to the past, bringing back those seasons of delightful interest, in which we are privileged to participate afresh. Nor do we think it is forbidden us, while we prize so highly all that we may of present religious enjoyment, and whatever we can by anticipation of the future, relating to the life that now is, or that which is to come, to recall the sacred seasons afforded us, during the ministry of a beloved pastor. Why may it not be true, that such an exercise will constitute a part of the happiness of heaven ?

The subjects of such recollections, were once living realities, and the impressions left upon the mind, are in such deep and fadeless colors, that the soul will bear them onward with it into eternity.

Of Payson, it may truly be said, and in the best sense, that he spoke and wrote for immortality. His entire ministry was of that deeply marked character, that it cannot be forgotten by those who sat under it. It must

haunt the sinner who has received no benefit from it, with painful forebodings ; while every recollection will renew the joys of that christian heart, which so often vibrated under its powerful and melting appeals.

If, in thus expressing our views of this man of God and his ministry, we were alone in our opinion, we might suppose, and others might, that some strange spell was upon us, and that we had been heaping metaphor upon metaphor, and adding extravagance to enthusiasm, in order to tantalize, or to provoke those of the present generation, who have had no personal acquaintance with him ; but we are happy to be able to introduce to the notice of our readers, a correspondent who knew him well, and whom they shall be permitted to hear in the following extract of a letter recently received.

“ I have a strong impression of his power as a preacher, especially in preaching Christ and the Gospel so naturally, and with such vividness as to burn upon the mind, even of an uninterested and youthful hearer, the great truths of redemption, *beyond any man I have ever heard ;* and I find as I advance in years, and early impressions come out more distinctly, an increasing evidence, how much he shaped and moulded my opinions of truth, even while I sat unconscious of his influence, but a child in his congregation. One influence I feel deeply, painfully, often, in the dissatisfaction, with which I measure my attempts to exhibit the Gospel, with what I know Payson accomplished ; with what I feel he used to exhibit to my mind. *The impression is there yet. You have heard him. and can understand me, but I cannot describe it to another !*

“ You felt when sitting under his preaching, or in his conference-room, or by his dying bed, that the truth

beamed from heaven upon *his* mind, and thence reflected upon your *own*. There was no artifice of rhetoric, no trick of oratory. He was a revealer of what he had seen, as Paul, when caught up to the third heavens. Hence, he spake with authority, and his words fell on the startled conscience as the word of God. *I must again appeal to those who heard him, to appreciate the truth of my position.* I think they will understand me. I would, there were some one, who could draw out the picture and color it to the life. *I confess my own inability to do it.* And yet, while I write, I find my heart going back to those early scenes, and distinctly I seem to see the man of God standing up, more as a *seer*, than a preacher, revealing the great truths of the Gospel, as though he looked into heaven, and brought back tidings of what he saw there.

“I remember how we all revered him, and were taught in our earliest instructions at home, to hear him with filial confidence; how our parents hallowed him in their hearts, and received his teachings as the wisdom of God; how we caught the same spirit, never dreaming of criticism, or caviling, for we never heard any at home.

“Alike in his portraiture of the sinner without the Gospel, and in his presentation of the Gospel to the sinner, he seemed to hold up the mirror, wherein you saw your need and your remedy. You forget him, as one forgets the polished glass, and saw only the vivid image; the truth standing out before the eye. *The impression, as compared with other preachers, I have often thought, is illustrated in the passage of Job, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee.*

“No man could sit under his ministry, without learning the Gospel,—the living Gospel. No preacher I



ever heard, so truly humbled man, and so highly exalted God. No one so singly preached Christ, the chief corner stone, the only foundation. The great doctrines of man's depravity, and God's sovereign grace ran through all Payson's sermons; so presented in their practical relations and connections, as to disarm caviling and enforce belief."

E. F. C.

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Dr. Payson had a full mind, the result of much reading and reflection. Hence the richness of his public discourses and familiar conversation. The remarkable facility with which he devoured the contents of a book, is alluded to in Dr. Cummings's work.

We take the liberty to state the following anecdote, which was recently related to us while on a visit to his native village :

"Edward," said the narrator, "came into my store, and there being a small collection of books, he asked and received permission to look at them. Taking one down, he went away into a corner and sat down to peruse it. It was a book of considerable size, and he had spent about twenty or thirty minutes in looking it over." "You may take that book home, Edward," said I, "and read it." "*I have read it, sir.*" he replied.

He seemed fully to understand the great object to be gained by reading. Intuitively, he would perceive whatever of truth, or beauty, or argument, there was, in the pages he turned over so rapidly, and would discriminate, and sift the precious from the useless, with great readiness.

His was not the unnatural craving of the mere book-worm, which devours indiscriminately, everything that it



meets, — which proves little more than an undigested and innutritive mass, often worse than useless.

In the early part of his ministry, we remember to have been present at a book-store, and to have seen him come in, (all hungry, forsooth, for a mere tit-bit to appease his mental craving, or to sharpen his appetite,) take up a book and lean over the counter, and spend, perhaps, ten or fifteen minutes in poring over it. The book which had attracted his notice, we recollect, was "Lord Lyttleton's Dialogues of the Dead." He would find something suggestive in such books, and in such half-hours, thus spent, whereby he was accumulating a stock of ideas to meet the draft which was constantly made upon him.

He possessed a magic wand, whose touch had the power to transmute everything into gold. He had such confidence in his intellectual powers, notwithstanding his great modesty, that he was always ready for every emergency that called them forth. Be the occasion what it might, he proved himself to be equal to it. He could always be trusted. Failure never put its seal upon any of his performances. No blunder, nothing unripe, irrelevant, or offensive to good taste, either in matter or manner, ever occasioned the slightest pain or mortification to his friends. He would say the very thing that was expected, and needed; and in the most unexceptionable manner. His taste and judgment seemed to be unerring. He could appear well and unembarrassed in whatever sphere he might be called to move. With a mind full and flexible, he could accommodate himself to the character of any company or individual; rising or falling, and finding his level, whether he stood in the presence of authority, among the great and the learned, or mingled with the humble and lowly.

He understood everything, whether of speech or behavior befitting his office and character; hence, he avoided whatever might prove offensive, and practised, in his round of ministerial duty, only what was acceptable and useful to his people. None had aught, justly, to say against him. All, on his part, was decorous, well-timed, prudent, and judicious. In his visits among his people, there was no outbreak of unguarded passion; no provoking assault upon the unessential, cherished partialities and principles of others. He would instruct and win to the truth, by gentle, though not less effectual means. All he did, was "in the meekness of wisdom." He had the ken of an experienced and well-instructed Seer. He had powers of deep fathoming. He had the discernment of the serpent, without its subtlety; "The Serpent blended with the Dove," and perhaps in the goodly proportion of which the facetious Lemuel Haynes speaks, that "an *ounce* of serpent was enough for a pound of dove." He was no gossip. No family or neighborhood was ever set in uproar, from any injudicious remark of his.

In his manner of saying things, there was a holy charm; seen alike in his conversation, his prayers, and preaching. This was acknowledged by the most superficial hearer.

Guided by an honest and enlightened zeal, in his great work, he wished for no excuse for abating his ardor. Religion was his chosen element, and he was seldom out of it. Said he, once, to the writer, "private christians think they may relax in their work, but no such claim is allowed to the minister." There was in him, however, no wish for such an indulgence.

No political storm, or calm, no domestic embarrass-

ment — however deadening such a state might prove to other ministers — was seen to prevent his onward and upward course, or the urging of his flock heavenward. Hence the deep interest which his people generally felt in meetings for prayer and conference, when he was expected to be present ; although there were gifted and spiritually-minded brethren in the church, usually present on those occasions, whose names would be considered as a sufficient guaranty for a well-conducted and profitable meeting, even though the pastor should be absent.

His holy life contained a living exposition of the Bible ; and with the Word of God, like fire, shut up in his bones, every heart rejoiced, when he appeared, for they felt that he brought God with him. The heart of every one present, “ bowed as the heart of one man,” and the sacred influence would kindle, and speed from heart to heart. Either the Spirit of God was unusually present at those seasons, giving the “ preparation of heart,” and applying the truth with unwonted energy, or there was a mysterious power (if we may be allowed the expression) that made the place where we had assembled, emphatically the “ gate of heaven.” We think we are prompted by no invidious spirit, when we say that we have never been present at any meetings of a similar description, that have risen to that intensity of interest, or were as profitable in their results, as were those where Dr. Payson presided. Nor are we alone in our opinion on this subject. Writes a brother in the ministry, who was once a member of his church, “ I can say, that I sat under his preaching, with great delight, and his words were sweet unto my taste. I have seen no where, (and it was during a space of thirty years) such delight in religious exercises, as his people seemed to enjoy. Dr. Payson filled

my mind more by my *two* years under his ministry, than others filled it by their ministry, the previous twenty years.”

C. F.

The attendance of his people upon his ministrations, was untiring. His preaching never produced satiety.

“Be but a person in credit with the multitude,” says Dr. South, “and he shall be able to make rumbling, incoherent stuff pass off for high rhetoric.”

Dr. Payson took no advantage of his great popularity, to palm “incoherent stuff” upon his audience for genuine matter. He furnished pure and “beaten gold for the sanctuary.” He rode upon no political or partisan hobby. He was misguided by no fanatical zeal. There was no trickery nor deception employed in order to affect his audience as with an April’s alternate showers and sunshine, of tears and smiles. Loftier, purer were the aims and motives of Payson. In the pulpit, and every where, in him “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.”

Some subject of vital interest to his flock, has occupied and in a measure concentrated his thoughts during the week. A “savor of life unto life, or of death unto death” does he realize, more than most men, will be the result of his “message from God.” *He feels it*—no man more than he. From the home of domestic piety, from his closet, from the bosom of his Savior, fresh for the loved duties of the sanctuary; in his eye, heaven or hell depending, he repairs to meet his beloved flock. The burden upon his heart is weighing him down. His countenance and whole demeanor betoken it. Sure, some angel is nigh to strengthen him, or he would sink under his burden. They have gathered to their respec-



tive places. As one among them, how often has the writer looked on his heavenly countenance, as he passed up the aisle, as with mingled emotions of veneration and love, our hearts greeted him ; pondering solemnly, upon the character of the new message he was about to deliver.

His week-day visits were like Sabbath days, and the light of the Sabbath then, was as " the light of seven days ; the light of the moon as the light of the sun." Witness ye, all who can and will, how sacred the temple-service of that hour ; how like the " gate of heaven " that house of God ; how " his speech dropped upon us ; how we waited for his words as for the rain, and opened our mouths wide as for the latter rain." He is in his place. He rises to invoke God's blessing. We feel that the blessing is already upon us ; our hearts are with his, and ere he utters a word, every yielding heart in the congregation is already bowed down in the dust. With one voice, yet with simultaneous desires, this first incense-cloud of the morning worship, goes up from the altar, and our spiritual leader, like " Moses, had gone up to the Mount to talk with his Maker, face to face."

We have intimated that his published discourses fail to present a correct view of his pulpit power. The sermons of many others read as well, perhaps better ; they may be more captivating in their style ; finer specimens of pulpit eloquence ; yet rarely, we think, do we open a volume of sermons, that would furnish page after page, more desirable specimens of all that we wish to find in sermons ; perspicuous in diction, clear and conclusive in argument, brilliant and forcible in illustration, sound in doctrine, and pungent in application. This latter quality, pungency of application, is very apparent in his written



discourses ; but especially did the consciences of the impenitent feel the searching appeal from his living voice.

A very respectable lady, now residing in Maine, not long since remarked to the compiler, in substance as follows : —

“ I was once a school-mate of Dr. Payson, in New Ipswich, N. H., where he prepared for college. As I visited Portland, I attended, occasionally, at his church.

On a Sabbath morning, purposing to hear Dr. Payson, I invited a lady of my acquaintance to accompany me, with which request she complied.

Dr. Payson's text was from Hosea, iv : 17 ; “ Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone.”

The sermon was of that searching character that proved a detector of heart idolatry in her companion, who had not probably been accustomed to listen to such bold and uncompromising attacks, upon her bosom sins. Her fair fabric, built upon an external conformity to the Gospel, was about to fall in ruins. Being invited to revisit the same place of worship in the afternoon, “ No,” exclaimed she, “ Dr. Payson tore away all my idols in the morning ; I shall not venture there again.”

Such was the general character of his sermons. The “axe he laid at the root of the tree.” He drove the ploughshare so adroitly, and so deep, that every root and shoot was discovered and upturned. No secret corruption, motive or passion of the heart, with which he was not perfectly acquainted. He knew where to strike in order to hit. Thus he detected and exposed to the view of the hearers all their secret sins, to their mortification and conviction. This consummate knowledge of the heart, was one of his distinguishing characteristics. The

conscience trembled under his sturdy blows ; for he was a Boanerges, as well as a son of consolation.

The Rev. Dr. J., a fine scholar, and of a remarkably meek and quiet spirit, being once invited to preach his evening lecture, inquired of Dr. Payson before meeting, how he should come to his people on that evening, "with a rod, or in the spirit of meekness?" "Come to them," said Dr. Payson, "with a *broad-axe*." "Therefore, have I hewed them by the prophets." Hosea v : 6.

Aside from the peculiar richness and strength of his voice, the soul-speaking eye, and a countenance irradiated with the beauties of holiness, which would awe the whole assembly into a most reverent frame of mind, producing a silence, which seemed to say, "Speak, thou servant of the Most High, for we are all present, to hear all that is commanded thee of God ;"—irrespective of all these extrinsic accompaniments, to which, some have attributed his great pulpit power, and his success as a preacher, he possessed an exuberance of glowing thought that blazed out in his pulpit productions, especially in his extempore efforts, with a power seldom witnessed. That his peculiar manner in the pulpit had much to do with the effect produced upon his audience, is true ; it could not be otherwise. We are willing that this consideration should have its due weight in forming an estimate of his character as a preacher. Yet it is an assertion very far from the truth, to say that he was indebted to his manner in the pulpit, or to his eminent piety even, for the surprising power which he exerted over his audience.

The remark is very common, that the pulpit talents of Whitefield, constituted his great popularity as a preacher. From what is seen in his published discourses, supposing them to be a correct representation of his mind, the

opinion is very fairly deduced. Our personal knowledge of Dr. Payson, gathered from many years of careful observation of him as a living preacher, in connection with the great excellence of his published works, effectually destroys all justness of comparison between the two men, as it respects mental power. Whitefield unquestionably had greater popularity than Payson, but it was drawn from a different source. Payson's sermons speak for themselves. Solid, logical, intellectual, deeply spiritual and experimental—qualities which do not superabound in Whitefield's sermons.

We have a witness to the great power and effect of Dr. Payson's preaching, in the testimony of those yet living, which the printed page, of necessity, must be insufficient to afford. His constant hearers, even at this remote period, have that living witness in precious keeping, speaking from the countenance, at the bare mention of his name.

We think it was his own remark, that if any of his sermons had been specially useful, they were his extemporaneous ones, and for reasons, perhaps, already stated.\*

In a journal which we kept during a few years of the early part of his ministry, we noted down many of his texts, with the heads and divisions of his unwritten sermons, which will give a general idea of their character,

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\*Rev. T. Scott, speaking of the superiority of extempore preaching to written sermons, remarks—

“The degree, in which, after the most careful preparation for the pulpit, new thoughts, new arguments, animated addresses, often flew into my mind, while speaking to a congregation, even on very common subjects, makes me feel as if I were quite another man, than when poring over them in my study. There will be inaccuracies, but generally, the most striking things in my sermons, were unpremeditated.”

some of which may appear in the appendix. But who shall gather up those thoughts of beauty, imagination and power, which fell from his lips? "Gone with the breath that gave them utterance," as he said of the prayer offered on a special occasion, a copy of which was requested of him, by a lady who had listened to it.

Could some pen have inscribed upon the walls of his church, the sentiments of brilliancy and pathos as they burst from the lips of eloquence, in his extemporaneous effusions, whether of prayer or preaching, how interesting the record; how attractive would be the spot, to one who had never been a listener, as he should stand and read the memorial. Many a living heart yet vibrates to the recollection of the precious words; and we doubt not, many a conscience that once felt the pointed arrow from his strong arm, in the still hour of recollection, feels it still.

The force of these remarks of Dr. Scott, will be generally acknowledged, as agreeing with the experience of most ministers. And yet, it should be remarked, that both Scott and Payson, were in the habit of a free use of the book and the pen. They were close students; their literary treasures were always accumulating; without which, these fine thoughts, strong arguments, and apt illustrations, had never been born. Creative genius and fancy, however strong and original, must have some material, some chaotic elements, at least, from which to speak their fair worlds into existence.

There was no flagging in Dr. Payson's pulpit performances. It was not a superior sermon now and then, as some special occasion might demand. His sermons on the most ordinary occasions, were not mere hurry-graphs, or common-place performances. At least, they never so seemed to us.



The "mysterious lake" within, afforded rich and ample resources from which he was never at a loss to meet every call and occasion ; and with a credit unsuspected and unfailing, did he sustain himself, through a period of twenty years.

From the elevated position, in which he first appeared as a preacher, he was never compelled to descend. Although remarkably popular at first, a popularity well-based and well-balanced, he never broke down. His was not the borrowed capital, the mere *show* of intellectual wealth. He came to his profession, affluent in everything that is necessary to adorn, and strengthen, and perpetuate a useful, successful and brilliant ministry. By nature highly gifted, a student of books and of men at an early age, his knowledge grew up with him ; not as the lean ox that by change of pasture fattens upon the luxuriant herbage, and gathers flesh to be lost as soon. His flesh was "worked on to him ;" it was of a steady growth, healthy and enduring, with muscle strong, nerve enough, and all in fair and beautiful proportions. Nothing thread-bare or imbecile in his preaching, gave the least intimation of intellectual bankruptcy. His was the eagle's flight. On strong and elastic pinions he attained a lofty elevation above most men, and continued longer on the wing.

Who ever listened to him, in his early or later ministry to hear a discourse prosy, or uninteresting ? And yet he seemed unconscious of their excellency or power. He thought but little of his own performances, and would express surprise at being told of a particular sermon that had been blessed to some one of his hearers. His low opinion of it, would elicit the remark, "Some crooked crab-stick." His great humility would not suffer him to



be forward in recognizing or acknowledging the amazing effect which truth coming from his lips, produced upon the minds of his hearers.

There was no subject which came under his observation, that he was not able to grasp and handle with the strength of a giant. He was an adroit and mighty operator. He would examine and dissect every subject in such a manner that the spectator would apprehend the exact position and proportion of its several parts ; its symmetry, its beauty, and its importance.

No vapid thought could be the legitimate offspring of his brain. No flashy, trashy ideas ever escaped his lips or pen. His mind was of that elegant mould, that whatever might be poured into it, there came out only, and always, that which was most perfect in its kind.

He used to remark, that, "the *voice*, was one half to a minister," a remark, we grant, true in a measure, to the observation of every one. The fact was obvious in his own case. "The voice is the key which unlocks the heart," some good judge of human power and passion, remarks. Its strength, and depth, its compass, its mellowness and rich intonations, make an irresistible impression upon the mind, and the heart is nerved by its magic power. The great advantage arising to the possessor of this natural gift, is unquestionable ; yet much more than mere sound in its most harmonious modulation, is necessary to perfect the acceptable and efficient orator. Nor could it be the mere effect of voice, perfectly managed as his was, that captivated the mind and hearts of his hearers, and left them spell-bound when he would pronounce, for example, a quotation of poetry of some half a dozen lines, appropriately introduced into his discourse, always with fine taste and judgment, and with subduing

effect. In this practice, however, he very sparingly indulged ; as he once remarked when conversing on the subject, that he never *sought* for such quotations, where-with to embellish his discourses. We refer, particularly, to the first or second year of his ministry, when the lamp of his genius, fed by the kindling ardor of youth, burned with an effulgence that became somewhat dimmed in after years. But *then*, when the lines of the poet would come forth from his lips, the effect was electrical, overpowering. Then, your “ strength was to sit still ” — if you could.

We shall not soon forget the manner in which he pronounced from the pulpit those beautifully descriptive lines of Goldsmith,

“ As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm ;  
Though round its breast, the rolling thunders spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

The emotions it awakened are not easily described. If you have ever witnessed a scenic representation of thunder and lightning, and will institute the comparison between that artificial mimicry, and an electric explosion from the clouds, you may judge, in a measure, of the difference of Dr. Payson’s manner of pronouncing those lines, and that of almost any ordinary speaker.

An illustration and confirmation of this remark we lately witnessed. The preacher had selected the same lines of Goldsmith ; he had the reputation of more than an ordinary elocutionist, and he was. The performance went off as it would from most — well ; but only to confirm us in the opinion we had already formed of the vast

superiority of Dr. Payson's elocution. Our judgment — which was made up more than forty years since — no subsequent observation of other public speakers, has induced us to alter.

Although no two speakers can be found, who are just alike in voice or manner, yet a resemblance is sometimes witnessed, and some speakers have been successfully imitated ; but we have never heard the man, yet, who has scarcely reminded us of Dr. Payson, in manner or voice ; nor is it in the power of any language to describe them. You must have seen and heard him, to obtain any correct idea of them, unlike as he was in these respects to any other to whom we have ever listened. Some of his tones might be caught ; some persons might even “ steal his thunder,” but the “ touch ethereal,” the flash, was peculiarly and exclusively his own.

“ He *thinks lightning*,” is remarked of a celebrated barrister. Not an unapt representation, is it, of the mind which we are describing ?

After what has been said of the effectiveness of Dr. Payson as a preacher, it will probably be understood by those who have never heard him, that he was an impassioned speaker ; and he was ; yet not in the way, perhaps, which they may have imagined.

He was rapid in his utterance, as we think, to a fault ; especially in pronouncing his written discourses ; yet, so distinct was his enunciation, that his hearers never lost a word. We remember once to have reminded him of this supposed fault. The remark he made was, in substance, that others might be slower in the delivery of their sermons, but that he could not be. “ It would not be natural in me to do so.” He was conscious himself, that his manner of utterance must be in accordance with his natural temperament.

With respect to gesture, in the pulpit, he found, that for him to "suit the action to the word," he must use no action at all; but let truth and feeling speak for themselves, in their own simple and unadorned expression. For *him* to have adopted a different course, would have been as incongruous as for those of a cold and phlegmatic temperament to have attempted an imitation of his manner. An illustration of this remark was found in his immediate neighborhood. We refer to the Rev. Francis Brown, D. D., afterwards President of Dartmouth College. The latter would have compared, in many respects, with Dr. Payson. He was of noble bearing in person, of keen intellect, and ardent piety; yet a perfect contrast with the former in his style of composition, and in his pulpit manner.

President Brown, in his preaching, always reminded us of the ocean, swelling slowly and majestically in its undulations. His constitutional temperament was of such a cast, that his thoughts, when conceived and ready for utterance, came heaving up, wave after wave—and they were thoughts of great brilliancy and beauty—while Payson's mind and manner were like the waters which sped deep and rapid along their channel, eddying and circling upon the bosom of the lake, and in haste to find the outlet, through which they might leap in grandeur over the foaming precipice.

In the pulpit, Dr. Payson stood almost motionless. Occasionally, and somewhat mechanically, he changed his position, alternately, to the right or left, in addressing his audience below, seldom, if ever, directing his eyes to those in the gallery.

He had the least possible rhetorical flourish in preaching. Indeed, there was nothing that approximated to it.



There was no sawing in the air, in unavailing efforts to give an effectiveness to a sentence that it never possessed ; no "strut or start theatric," as is sometimes seen disgracing the pulpit-comedian of the present day ; no vain display of the lily-white hand, stretched out with an affected, artificial trembling, as if it had been stricken with the palsy ; no clenched fist, upraised, and coming down upon the Bible, like as an auctioneer's hammer, or as the smith's upon the anvil.

We could almost wish, sometimes, that he would give us now and then, one modest gesture, to let us know that a paralysis was not upon his right arm ; some little perpendicular movement of the hand, lawyer-like, when laying down his case, or enforcing his argument, but no ; there was nothing, save an occasional raising of the forefinger, which motion comprised the sum total of his gesticulation in the pulpit ; and yet he was the most effective preacher to whom we have ever listened.

But would not his preaching have been more effective had he used more pulpit oratory ? The possibility of such a thing we will not deny, but in so doing he would have been another man. Payson could not have done it and been Payson still. As of President Edwards, or Dr. Emmons and others, so of Dr. Payson, it might be said that the truth, simple and unadorned as it flowed from their lips, could not have been more impressive, with whatever graces of delivery it might have been arrayed. We looked for no such display in our minister. Whether it was because we had always been used to his peculiar simplicity of manner, we are not sure, but in *him* we judged all parade in the desk as out of character. Especially, for *him*, with the London cockney, to have attempted to "hact the hora-



tor," would have been considered little less than a burlesque upon the pulpit. His people in him had got their standard of pulpit eloquence, and were satisfied. Dr. Payson from principle, would have repudiated all such artificial embellishment merely for *effect*, from a natural modesty, or from a conviction that the truth "needs not the foreign aid of ornament;" or more probably, from an intuitive perception of what was natural and befitting in *him*, he adopted the simple style of delivery which characterized his pulpit performances. He chose rather to act in accordance with the pious Herbert's recommendation to ministers, "to dip and season all our words and sentences in our own hearts before they come into our mouths, so that the auditors may plainly perceive that every word is heart-deep," than to be solicitous to please by external display.

A stranger on first hearing Dr. Payson, would be surprised, yet gratified, in finding his far-famed eloquence to be of so different a cast from that which he had anticipated. His appearance in the pulpit was different from that of most preachers, perhaps we may say, from that of any other, and his eloquence of a character difficult of attainment or imitation. It was more than mere gracefulness, attitude or flourish, but coming up from the lowest depths of the soul it was expressed in the peculiar tones of his voice, and seen diffused over his whole impassioned countenance, telling with unmistakable effect upon the feelings of his audience.

We have said that any gesticulation, in him, would have impaired rather than improved his delivery. That others may avail themselves of such aids, with advantage to the general effect of their speaking, is doubtless true.

For instance, — the elder Dr. Beecher, with his peculiar constitutional and concentrated energies, must, when he speaks, give vent to them in correspondent action. His horizontal gestures, sudden, quick, impassioned, are in character. They suit the thoughts he utters ; they suit the man. He gets his meaning into you, and in spite of you. They are home thrusts.

Tie the Doctor's hands, and he could scarcely speak at all. He would agonize under the bondage, and every auditor would say at once let the preacher be unmanacled, that nature may speak and act itself out as it will. Beecher must be Beecher.

Take another instance, the late Dr. Griffin, the prince of pulpit orators of his day, perhaps of any day. His noble form is before you ; his very presence speaks, and speaks in almost more than mortal majesty. Watch his thoughts of brilliancy and beauty, as they flow from a mind where only such thoughts are conceived, arrayed in language so powerfully impressive, and in diction of surpassing elegance.

You have seen his tall and portly figure as he rises in the pulpit, and you expect to find his action in keeping with his majestic person. You are prepared to witness the slow and lofty yet graceful sweep of his arm, accompanying the utterance of his grand and weighty thoughts. There is an out-spoken dignity in his countenance, and in every motion. You are captivated by his eloquence ; nay more, he has opened your bosom ; a massive spear is in his right hand, and the conscience of the assembly has felt its point. Anon he soars as on eagles' wings, himself penetrated with the sublimity of his subject ; for his thoughts which have just been hovering over the "burning lake," are now

of heaven, and he has opened to your enraptured gaze, the gates of paradise, and you almost enter with him there.

This conformity of action or gesture to the peculiar genius of individual minds, applies in Dr. Payson's case. God has made no two men alike. When every man acts himself he acts in character. It is all we expect, and just what we have a right to expect. All else is sheer affectation; nature is despoiled, and defeat ensues.

A keen observer of mankind, yet probably an enemy to evangelical religion, on hearing Mr. Wesley preach, remarked, that "he was evidently an *actor*, as much as Garrick was." From such an imputation, Dr. Payson's great simplicity and sobriety of manner, effectually shield him.

In his extemporaneous performances, whether in his preaching or prayers, notwithstanding the great rapidity of his utterance, we do not remember a single instance during the time we sat under his ministry, of his having to recall a word. There was no tripping, no lapsus linguæ in his speech. Words as apposite as possible, seemed always to "come as ready servitors," and always found their appropriate place. There was no helter-skelter either in his thoughts or language; no sentence fell from his lips unfinished, lame in its construction, feeble or tame in sense. A zig-zag rambler, he never was; but always in the direct path to his point, earnest, intent, seldom missing his aim, and without irrelevancy or bombast. No unbecoming thought, nothing trite, no cant; no vulgarism to disgust the most fastidious hearer; nothing to dissipate or distract your attention. No yawn in his hearers, could be a legiti-

mate offspring of his preaching. His extempore sermons did not usually exceed thirty or thirty-five minutes in their delivery ; his written ones not more than forty or forty-five minutes. We never knew him to make what would be called a long prayer ; at least, never one that seemed so.

He would encompass you in the net of his eloquence ; you were caught, and listen you must, imprisoned, entranced : — listen you must, and for yourself ; there was no opportunity or desire to listen for others. Each hearer felt that he was “ apart ; ” in the language of the prophet, “ the husband apart, and the wife apart ; ” every hearer apart, and his neighbor apart.

Conscience could not long “ sleep on rose or myrtle.” His words came not over the assembly like the soothing strains of an Eolian harp, merely to assist the enraptured listener to revel as in the bowers of a sentimental elysium ; nor as the aroma from blushing flowers of rhetoric in subtile fragrance, causing them to “ expire of a rose in aromatic pain.” No one went away half-intoxicated with the nectar that had distilled from the speaker’s lips to overcome, and poison, and destroy, by its fascination ; giving a repose fatal to the peace of the soul ; a narcotic that lulls the patient “ in dreams of unreal bliss,” the “ mere mockery of joy.” Elevated and elevating were all his thoughts ; so weighty that an angel might listen with wrapt attention, and yet so simple that a child might understand him.

As a minister he highly respected his office. The pulpit was his forte. The man of God, indeed, he was, out of it, and every where ; but when he stood forth as the “ ambassador of God to guilty men,” all the sympathies of a brother man, and of a fellow-sinner were in



full play, while the responsibility involved in his high commission, and the results of a faithful or unfaithful stewardship, seemed to press upon his soul as with a mountain's weight.

The "solemn awe" with which the Poet was filled in the bare contemplation of the sacredness of the pulpit, was with Dr. Payson, a deep realization. He once remarked, that while preaching, "it seemed as if Christ stood by his side in the pulpit, looking over his shoulder." So sensibly did he realize the Divine presence, not only as affording the promise of aid in the discharge of his duties, but as a powerful incentive to fidelity in his great work.

There was no pompous display of himself. His pulpit performances, from the opening Invocation of the morning, to the closing Benediction of the evening, partook alike of the same characteristic and inimitable solemnity. No one of these services appeared in his view so insignificant, as to tempt him to say "no matter for this." They were all performed without the least sign of affectation or carelessness in his manner. The recognition of the fact that his commission was of Divine appointment, produced in his mind such a conviction of its authority and importance, that he felt upborne thereby to speak with a solemnity that well became his high and holy vocation. He knew that a "dispensation of the Gospel was committed to him," and the amazing results which were to follow his ministry were never absent from his mind. He reverently bowed to the high behest of heaven, receiving with humble awe, at God's mouth, the messages he should from time to time deliver. Hence the high respect he felt for his office.



The claims of his people respecting their partialities, their opinions and feelings he never slighted ; that this was true as it regarded their spiritual interests is abundantly evident. The " Holy Ghost had made him overseer " of his flock. His ordination vows were not more certainly registered in heaven, than engraven upon his heart. He never seemed to lose sight of them. He was not the " idol-shepherd," who fed himself and not his flock. He was no mercenary priest ; he sought not *theirs*, but *them*.

Less to him than to most others applied the rebuke contained in Cowper's description of an unfaithful shepherd.

" The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed."

He viewed his hearers as immortal beings, and himself, in a measure, as the instrument in the hands of the Divine Spirit, of molding their characters, and fixing their eternal destinies. Could one, under such influences, be otherwise than circumspect in everything that related to his ministerial intercourse ; earnest in the pulpit, and grave in his deportment out of it ? Whatever might have been his misgivings with respect to this matter, we could say, unhesitatingly, " how holily and unblamably he lived among us." No man more than he, could say " I am pure from the blood of all men."

There were able champions of the truth, in his immediate neighborhood ; some, like himself, just girded for the war, fresh, and pressing onward for the crown of victory ; there were others of a more veteran character. **The cause of evangelical truth in that region, was gain-**

ing a decided ascendancy over error, and it was matter of congratulation to the friends of Zion, that such valiant men were in the field. An era of hope had dawned upon the churches.

Most of those who composed the council which ordained Dr. Payson, have gone to their reward; and of those who were coadjutors in their youth-time with him, some have ceased from their labors.

The names of Brown, of Mead and Jenkins, and others who have departed, and who were once associated with him in the toils and privileges of the ministry, will be held in most respectful and grateful remembrance.

And some remain as pillars still in the church of God on earth.

The Rev. Dr. Beman, now of Troy, N. Y., once an intimate fellow-laborer, and located side by side with Dr. Payson; Coggs well and Rand, and others, though they represent a by-gone age, yet remain strong to labor in God's vineyard. They remind us of other days; days of precious memory, and of the truths they preached, more precious still. We love to name them—to associate them with the memory of the man whom we so loved and respected; and thus grouping them, to form a memorial of a most delightful period in the evangelical history of Maine.

## CHAPTER VIII.

His sermons considered, comparatively. — Notice of Rev. Mr. Jenkins. — The simplicity of the style of Dr. Payson's preaching illustrated by an anecdote respecting two sailors. — Saying of a Scottish housewife. — The excellency of Dr. Payson's published sermons, called in question by some. — His "Thoughts" reviewed. — Notice of "The Pastor's daughter."

### CHARACTER OF HIS SERMONS.

Comparisons have been instituted between Dr. Payson's published discourses, and those of contemporary preachers.

His worthy coadjutor, the Rev. Charles Jenkins, who labored side by side with him in Portland for several years, an elegant scholar, and most faithful pastor, might, in the opinion of some, have exceeded him in the brilliancy of his style of writing. Perhaps he drew from his quiver an arrow of a smoother polish, and of a more brilliant feather, though not capable of greater execution.

Allowing to Mr. Jenkins' sermons more literary ornament and polish, yet for originality, and boldness of conception, directness of aim and appeal, as well as perspicuity of style, we are compelled to pronounce in Dr. Payson's favor.

Considering the celebrity of his unambitious rival, with whom the comparison is instituted, the verdict we bring in, contains a high encomium upon Dr. Payson, for it would be considered as saying much in any man's praise to admit him equal to Jenkins.

Few writers have conveyed their thoughts with less circumlocution. He was quick to detect any extraneous or irrelevant matter in the productions of his theological students. As a writer, his language contained the sentiments he would express most exactly, and nothing else. Said a professional gentleman of eminence to the writer, "I have never heard a speaker who expressed so much in so few words."

He practiced upon the principle of the Apostle, "using great plainness of speech." How easily might he have clothed his thoughts in a more superb array had he chosen to do it; but he adopted a "more excellent way." His own opinion on this subject, and an illustration of it, will be seen in the following incident.

At the close of an evening lecture as he walked down the aisle, with the retiring audience, he overheard two sailors remarking upon the sermon. "That," said one to the other, "was the *plainest* sermon I ever heard." "The highest compliment," remarked Dr. Payson, "I ever had paid to my preaching."

Writes a correspondent, "Dr. Payson had the faculty of adapting himself to every occasion. Some able ministers cannot do this. They will preach an hour and a half when they should preach but half an hour, and will be inappropriate in other services. I now remember with what pleasure and satisfaction I heard, more than twenty-eight years ago, a sermon he preached at Fryeburg, at the ordination of Mr. Hurd; it was so



appropriate, so well arranged, so comprehensive, and so brief.”

C. F.

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It is not every good preacher that has the independence or moral courage to hazard his reputation as a learned man, clothing his thoughts in plain and simple language, which though chaste and unoffending to a pure taste, shall yet be upon a level with the understanding of the most illiterate of his hearers.

There are those who would “show off” their learning or oratory to amaze the vulgar, and thus, forsooth, conceal the sterility of their thoughts, by the intricacy of involved periods or verboseness of language, in order to obtain from their hearers the reputation of great sermonizers. “Our minister gave us a *deep* sermon to-day,”—is a very doubtful compliment.

There are some authors who shoot away among the stars, beyond the reach of their own vision, as well as that of their readers; or, venturing beyond their depth, are drowned in the unfathomable profound. It is sometimes so with ministers.

Says a late writer, ironically, in allusion to this subject, “A mistiness of meaning is no detriment; things *loom* large through it, and many feel like the canny old Scottish housewife, who, after hearing and praising a celebrated preacher, being asked if she *understood* him, answered, “Hoot mon, wad I hae the presumption?”

It has been said by some that Dr. Payson’s published discourses will sink to their proper level when his personal friends shall have left the earth. The remark, as we understand it, implies that the popular estimation of them, is above their intrinsic value. We think otherwise.



There are now among the admirers of his published sermons, those who were not his personal friends, having never known or heard him, and who cannot, therefore, have made up their judgment from any personal partialities. Again, no sermon of his, on which the public eye has rested, has *yet*, as we are aware, lowered in the scale of public opinion, a single iota. This statement is unquestionable, as it regards his *occasional* sermons which have floated on the wings of the four winds, have been acknowledged as vehicles of the richest thought, embodiments of the most valuable truth, have been translated into various languages, and are still read with the deepest interest as sermons of extraordinary value. What reason is there to suppose a future generation will appreciate them less than the present? Again, if his discourses when delivered from the pulpit, captivated and enchained the attention of enlightened auditors, and that, not principally for their manner of delivery, but for the excellency of their matter, why should these sermons fail to secure the admiration of those who shall *read* them at any future time? It is not the character of such sermons, more than it is of pure gold, to be affected by age; although a coin bright from the mint be specially attractive, and bearing the sovereign's image, may be considered by a loyal subject, additionally valuable on that account, and still more so as the gift of a friend, yet are its intrinsic qualities not affected by any such circumstances; but passing through a thousand hands, and to distant lands and times, it is still gold, only and always.

It is a common remark, and may apply in this case, that published sermons are not read with such interest and avidity, as are volumes of truth issuing from the

press in other forms; yet we cannot believe that *Payson's* sermons, more than others of intrinsic merit, are to be piled away to gather dust, as mere theological lumber, or that they are to float forgotten or unappreciated down the stream of oblivion. Facts justify no such conclusion. The style and the substantial character of his works are so much like the Bible itself that they will retain their freshness and their interest like that Book of God, measured by whatever standard of sound criticism, and of whatever age.

It is not known that any of the religious or literary periodicals of his day, shared in the offerings of his pen. The cause we are unable to assign. It might have been from want of time to devote to such an object, or from disinclination, or from conscientious motives. That the periodical press would have been greatly enriched and adorned by the productions of his tasteful and prolific pen, had he so employed it, admits of no doubt.

Unfortunate is it, for the cause of truth, that his epistolary correspondence was so limited. Those of his letters which have been published do but awaken regret, that, with Cowper and Newton and other kindred minds, he had not in this way blessed the religious world with the out-gushings of his sanctified genius; that *his* \*Cordiphonia is not to be seen side by side with that of those distinguished christian authors who have thus enriched our religious and miscellaneous literature. While his sermons, the massive gold, are placed on the shelf with those of Edwards and Dwight and Beecher and Woods, his letters and lighter works would have

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\*The utterance of the heart.

been precious treasures for the gratification and improvement of the christian's spare half-hour.

“PAYSON'S THOUGHTS.”

None of his published writings afford more rare or beautiful specimens of original thought, power of illustration, or convincing appeals to the conscience, than the little volume, which bears the above title;—for several years circulated in a separate form, and more recently published with his “complete works.” These thoughts are gems, and if ever were penned “thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,” they are found in this selection of his “Remains.” They fall not behind the celebrated “Remains” of Cecil and Newton; and are to constitute a monument of his genius, wisdom and piety, lasting as time. The frequent quotations from them, evince their value in the public estimation, and from their peculiar brilliancy and originality, are known as soon as seen.

Remarks a correspondent:—“I think his “Thoughts” give the best idea of the man. There was a fullness and appositeness about his illustrations, and such perfect fitness in the language in which he clothed them, that nothing could be added or diminished without marring their beauty. When I recall them, as he spoke some of them in my hearing, on his dying bed, and recall at the same time, his flashing eye, and rapturous tone of utterance, which disease could not destroy, I am reminded of one of his dying prayers, in which he desired he might be a mirror, to reflect the glories beaming upon him. That conveyed my idea of the man in his mighty

influence over the mind, more than any form of expression I can frame.

"I have often used these ( "Thoughts," ) he further writes, "and rarely without impression. I remember one trembling inquirer, who told me he should have given up, and gone back in despair of ever finding the Savior, had I not related the illustration from Payson of the three blind men restored to sight ; one at midnight — the second at day-break, the third at noon-day. It was the mirror held up to his eye ; he saw and believed. Indeed, I often think of Fuller's sentence when remembering Payson. "If arguments are the pillars of the building, illustrations are the windows which let in the most light." Payson reasoned in parables, and the light poured in on the mind, daguerreotyped the truth there."

E. F. C.

"THE PASTOR'S DAUGHTER."

This little volume contains a most invaluable treatise for young inquirers. Although Dr. Payson's mind and manner are so obvious throughout the book, yet it is not to be considered as having been written by him. It is the production of his daughter, Mrs. L. P. Hopkins, who is well known as a popular writer of the present day. It is in the dialogue form, containing conversations between the writer's father and herself while very young. She is represented as just having had her eyes opened to a sense of her spiritual condition, and as being solicitous of guidance from one, who, as her father and pastor, was qualified above most others, to give her the instruction she needed. The honest simplicity, and awakened interest of childhood, is seen in the various



inquiries which she makes, while the wisdom, experience, and remarkable tact of the father, appears in his answers. Encouraged by noticing the critical state of her mind, thus early awakened to the important subject of religion, he becomes himself, unwontedly quickened while aiding the young inquirer in her search for the Pearl of great price ; an inquiry, which terminated after a long and severe conflict, in a successful issue. The dialogue form is adopted the better to express the simple feelings of the young mind, and that her readers, especially the young, may understand more clearly the difficulties, perplexities and opposition that dwelt in her heart, and in every heart. The progress of conviction as she receives increasing light, gives opportunity for the pastor's seasonable interposition. The reader may stop at each stage of her hesitation and inquiry, to hear remarks for the explanation or removal of her difficulties, or, to convince her of the remaining pride and selfishness of her heart.

The various movements of her depraved nature are narrowly watched by the sagacious pastor, every "refuge of lies" to which she runs for a shelter, is, one after the other, swept away, until defenceless, and stripped of every hope of salvation other than the true one, she submits, a willing captive to sovereign grace. The "weapons of her warfare" in the struggle, though of infantile growth, are nevertheless, wielded with the same adroitness as by older subjects ; showing that the same grace is needed to disarm the infant rebel, as to conquer the stout-hearted veteran in iniquity. She fought to the last.

The volume is recommended especially to young persons who begin to feel that their heart is not right



with God. We have before asserted that the conversations in this book, as they appear in print, are not identically or literally as spoken by the parties; yet, from our knowledge of the man, and his general method of conversing with inquirers, the language and the expression are so life-like and characteristic, that we regard the book as containing not only the best specimen of his colloquial powers, but upon the whole as a very striking portrait of his mind.

## CHAPTER IX.

His sensitiveness with regard to the success of his labors.—His acute mental sufferings.—The cause explained.—Dr. T. Scott's remarks on the same subject.—Advantages of spiritual trials considered, as forming christian character, and triumph in death.—Dr. Payson, not of all men most miserable.—The character of his piety described,—defended.—Objections answered.

It is well known, from his published diary and letters, as well as from other sources, how much his hopes and joys were affected by the state of religious feeling among his people, from time to time. This was his thermometer ; whether properly used or correctly graduated it is not our business to decide.

If it were an undue anxiety which he manifested, surely "he erred on virtue's side." It is not to "nervousness," but to other, and very different causes that his deep solicitude respecting this matter, is to be ascribed. The object of his grand pursuit from the commencement of his ministry to its close, viz : the salvation of his people, awakened and kept in play his mightiest energies. It was an object paramount to all others. Of this object, he seemed never to lose sight. He beheld it not dimly, as in the distance ; but near and distinctly. Not occasionally, or fitfully ; but constantly, and with a zeal in compassing his object, that never

tired. "I must be about my Father's business" was the precept he borrowed from his Divine Lord — seen engraven upon his heart, and upon his life, to his dying day.

Was the solicitude and prayerful expectation he manifested, respecting the success of his labors, unreasonable or presumptuous? Did he not go forth "bearing the precious seed, weeping" — and who will forbid that his heart should be set upon binding up the precious sheaves, or that he should grieve at the disappointment, if such a privilege were denied him? Would Elijah have experienced no disappointment had his prayers for rain remained long unanswered, and the "little cloud" not made its appearance; or, if when coming up it had been exhaled by the burning sun, and Israel's thirsty fields remained to mourn? Confidence in God's power and promise forbade these, his servants, to rest satisfied with a denial, or to sit down in indifference as to the result of their prayers. They both exemplified the "patience of the husbandman, in waiting for the early and latter rain," yet, it was a waiting consistent with deep solicitude and persevering prayer. And we may venture to inquire, on whom rests the imputation of blame in this case; upon him who expresses his yearning, agonizing desires for the salvation of his people, or on those who indulge but feeble expectations respecting the results of their labors; or who unbelievably say, "If the Lord would make windows in heaven might such a thing be," or "when the Lord's time shall come, sinners will be converted." The atmosphere of the Sabbath surrounded Dr. Payson during the week; faithfully and pensively, and with tears, he sowed the good seed, and he looked diligently for its up-springing.

"I go to meeting on the Sabbath," said one; "our minister is an excellent man. I have no fault to find with him. He gives us excellent sermons on the Sabbath, but, he preaches, and *there's an end o'nt.*"

No disrespect to his minister, was intended by this remark, and yet there is much meaning, and wholesome reproof contained in it.

It is sufficiently understood how much greater results might follow the preaching of the word, were it followed up with consecutive efforts for the impression of truth upon the conscience. Perhaps some "stricken deer" needs the kind hand to extract the arrow of conviction, or to pour oil into the bleeding wound. Some troubled heart may need the consolation which shall alleviate its anguish; some newly-awakened mind in its bewilderment, may need the wisdom of experience to guide it into the way of life.

In allusion to this subject, writes a successful American preacher, Rev. Mr. Congley, who, while in England had attended a service on the Sabbath, "The preacher had addressed the audience with much unction, but the results were not such as might be expected to follow such a discourse. Could he have stayed at the prayer-meeting which followed the sermon — assisted the brethren by his presence and influence, *to draw the net ashore*, then, good, he supposed, might have been done." I formerly," he adds, "cast out my net in this way, and retired without taking the trouble to see whether any soul had become entangled therein, and for months together, I was not aware of a single seal to my ministry. The brethren would say, "we are on the eve of a powerful revival," but when next Sabbath came, sinners were as far from God as ever, and were once more



ready to *play around and inside of my harmless net*. At last, I came to the conclusion that I would stand by my net, with tears and many prayers, and that I would not leave the fishing place till I had seen what success. There it was that I began to see more abundantly, the positive fruit of my labors. Sometimes, indeed, we had 'toiled all night and caught nothing;' but then we had this satisfaction, '*the net had been drawn ashore,*' and we had done the best we could."

"Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men" is a very noticeable and encouraging saying of our Lord to his ministers. In the way mentioned by this brother, or in some way other, in *following up* the truths delivered, in making effort after effort, giving line upon line, hoping and expecting that the concentration of Divine truth, bearing upon the sinners conscience, will, through the Holy Spirit, at length, be instrumental of his conversion, is agreeable to the word of God, and sound philosophy; and this, too, in perfect agreement with the sovereignty of God; which may have ordained such a course as the means whereby his gracious designs are to be accomplished. Although there may be frequent instances where the faithful minister fails to witness the desired result of his labors, which failure may arise from some cause, inscrutable to finite wisdom, yet, after unsuccessful, though faithful endeavors, we may have the consolation, once given to the prophet, "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the sight of the Lord;" for consolation, we say, if all probable means have been employed on our part for a successful issue of our labors. Yet this devoted minister of Christ, from morning till night, year in and year out, pondered upon the subject always nearest to his heart, with the deepest intensity of interest, even the salvation of his flock.



The truth of this assertion, none will dispute ; and who shall condemn him ? The ten thousand objects of earth, pursued by most with an ambition that never tires, had no charms for him. Their most urgent claims he disputed, yea, he challenged — he silenced ; attent only to the voice of souls crying in his ears “ arise and call upon thy God, if so be He may think of us, that we perish not.” And when you look at such a man, borne onward by an impetuous desire kindled at the altar of God, a self-martyred man for the sake of Christ and souls ; engaged in preaching, praying, warning, weeping, and as it were, *dying* to fulfil his high commision ; giving himself no rest unless he saw the successful result of his labors ; and with the settled conviction that earth with all its fairest promises, the material universe with all its splendid decorations and richest gems, in comparison with one immortal soul, was lighter than vanity, when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary ; can you wonder at the zeal he manifested in his great work ? and who will pronounce such an ardor unbecoming ; or place it to the score of *infirmities* that needed the mantle of charity ; that needed an apology ; that deserved the rebuke, which some have kindly, others, indignantly offered ? Did we believe that our pastor, while under the influence of such a zeal was merely writhing under a spasmodic, nervous excitement, or borne away by the illusions of the fanatic, that needed commiseration or restraint, that would make it necessary to say, “ Pardon thy servant in this thing ? ”

We are well aware, if his letters and diary had not revealed the fact, how he agonized for a revival of religion, and for the spiritual advancement of his church ; but

we never thought of attributing this earnestness to disordered nerves, any more than we should pronounce the man mad, who, while he stands upon some cliff that overlooks the ocean, and beholds the disabled wreck with the mariners clinging to its sides, exposed momentarily to the death-surge, with a concentrated agony of spirit in view of the impending danger, cries out, "can nothing be done for their rescue?" In such a dangerous and alarming condition, Dr. Payson believed the impenitent world around him, to be. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." This passage he felt; under its influence he wept and prayed and preached. Call it enthusiasm or fanaticism, nervousness or delirium, or what you will, in Dr. Payson; equally will those terms apply to the Prophet when he exclaims, "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people;" or to the Apostle who said "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren's sake according to the flesh." Let us pray, rather, that such nervousness may come upon all of the Lord's ministers; that many may yet be found among us weeping between the porch and the altar, saying "spare thy people, O Lord," or who can as truly adopt the declaration of Paul, "For ye know that for the space of three years I ceased not to warn every man night and day with tears." "So will we give Thee thanks, thou Holy One of Israel."

Thomas Scott, in a letter to a friend on this subject, remarks: "The apostle Paul was evidently a man of strong passions and peculiar sensibility, and being, by Divine grace exceedingly filled with love to the Lord

Jesus, and to the souls of men, his mind was affected with the most lively emotions of joy or sorrow, hope or fear, according to the tidings he received from the several churches of Christ.

At one time he complains that he *has no rest in his flesh, is filled with heaviness, and can no longer forbear, and that he writes out of much affliction, with anguish of heart, and with many tears.* At another, he declares he *is filled with comfort, and is exceedingly joyful in all his tribulations, being comforted by the faith of his beloved children, for now,* says he, *'we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.'* Mr. S. understands the Apostle, indeed, to intimate, that these were *things that concerned his infirmities*; and doubtless, he says, that this sanguine disposition, requires much correction and regulation, by Divine grace; but, when it is thus tempered and counterbalanced by proportionate humility, wisdom, patience and disinterestedness, *it may be considered as the main-spring of a minister's activity.* And as these united qualifications, certainly conduced very much to the Apostle's extraordinary usefulness, so they render his epistles peculiarly interesting to us, in all our inquiries concerning the best methods of promoting the enlargement and edification of the church.

"Thus were the infirmities of the Apostle overruled by Divine grace to subserve his comfort and usefulness. And the depth and variety of his sufferings proved the main-spring of his active labors in the service of his Master."

We may not be sufficiently aware, how the varying circumstances of life, may require different dispensations in the wise appointment of God, in order to promote our

spiritual interest, and our greatest usefulness. God places the bitter cup to the lips of some whom he is training up for usefulness and a higher reward. Some one remarks, and it well applies to Dr. Payson, that "adversity is often requisite, to give a proper direction and temper to *strong qualities*." God answers the prayers of some by "terrible things in righteousness."

The patient enduring will result in fruit unto eternal life; and doubtless Dr. P. and others who have been led through deep and troubled waters, needed from the Wise Physician such a treatment, that they might understand that God was indeed dealing with them, and for what purpose. Their "*strong qualities*" required the strong hand, to "give them a proper direction and temper." It has, perhaps, been thought by some, that Payson's peculiar experience, considering its dark and deep shades, was more to be deprecated than desired. It cannot be denied that it was terrible to suffer as he did; yet we are not sure that such an experience, upon the whole, may not be fraught (taking the lights and shadows together) with more enjoyment than that monotony in the experience of ordinary christians.

As the splendid prize, which accompanies into port the ship that has borne the shock of the battle, will compensate for the perils of the encounter, so may it prove in the christian's conflict with the enemies of his soul. Has the warfare been long and protracted, the more abundant will be the rewards of victory. Just as the tempest-tossed believer looks back upon the stormy ocean that threatened his ruin, will exult, with a more joyful triumph as he nears his desired haven.

"Would that I could cling more closely to my Master,



Would that in Him my sinking soul could rest ;  
Would that each shipwrecked hope, each new disaster,  
Might drive me closer to my Savior's breast.'

The truth of our position, viz : that reward is attached to conflict, has been very clearly illustrated in the remarkable experience of Dr. Payson, both in his life and in his death. Long before he died, " he had received at the Lord's hands *double* for all his sins." In life, " the peace of God that passeth all understanding ; " at death, the foretaste of " unspeakable glory."

Should it please God to send trials, severe and protracted upon the christian, if with the dispensation He grants the kind assurance that He is present to watch over the gold passing through the seven times heated furnace, and that it is only a purifying process to make him holier, more useful, and thus to be the better prepared for heaven, shall he dispute the wisdom of the appointment? Thus did not Job, nor Daniel nor David. Thus did not David's greater Son and Lord, while drinking of the unmitigated cup of suffering appointed for him. Think not of Dr. Payson as of all men most miserable, although the " pains of hell got hold upon him." The lions' den, the heated furnace, and the whale's belly were terrible places to be in ; yet, he who comes from the den, to tell of lions, is also prepared to speak of His power, who shut their mouths. Or if from the fiery furnace, it is to tell of the Son of God who was with him there ; and if out of the " belly of hell " there cometh the erring fugitive, it is to tell to others that " salvation is of the Lord." Bitterly as the christian mourns that his sins should render it necessary that he should come under the hidings of God's face, yet how dearly will he



prize the sunlight after a season of darkness. The hour of sacrifice and trial will bring with it Jehovah's uplifting and strengthening arm. The power of the second Adam will sustain the sinking believer when experiencing the dreadful sentence of the *First*; a support eminently afforded to the suffering, yet triumphant Payson.

Peter, sinking in the wave, only brings Christ nearer. The more severe the trial, the more conspicuous the grace which gives to the soul the power of endurance; or seasonably removes the trial.

Horrible as was the "Castle of Giant Despair," yet Bunyan does not suffer his pilgrim to escape it when he would portray the perfect character of his christian, that he might know that it was "an evil thing, and bitter, to depart from the living God," and feel forever afterwards his frailty and his dependence.

#### THE CHARACTER OF DR. PAYSON'S PIETY CONSIDERED.

The character of Dr. Payson's piety has by many been considered as constituting his chief excellence as a minister, and as almost the exclusive source of his popularity and success; thereby virtually disputing our claims for him, as possessing superior intellectual endowments, to which in part we contend his eminence and success is to be attributed. If, then, so much stress is laid upon the fact that it is his piety which has advanced him so much above others as a minister, we think every doubt and misgiving should be silenced with regard to its character. If piety has given him such a precedence and popularity, surely it must be of a genuine character, and possessed in a high degree. We regret to say, however, that by many, even his piety is undervalued. This opinion

we well know arises from misapprehension or misconception. These views did not obtain during his lifetime, at least except to a very limited extent, scarcely at all among his own people. That his piety was sincere and ardent but few are disposed to doubt. That it was of a healthy tone, and worthy of imitation, is a point which some have not so readily conceded. As a general remark, however, we say, fearlessly, that so far as the strictest integrity and purity of purpose, — a warm and unabating zeal in the service of Christ, — an extraordinary spirit of self-denial, humility and prayer are evincive of piety of an elevated and scriptural stamp, Payson's piety must be considered as such, and subject to no deduction, except what his constitutional temperament may demand. In a word his piety was scriptural, effective, constant, practical, symmetrical, winning, and condescending, — true to the pattern which descended from Heaven, described by the apostle. First pure, then gentle, peaceable, easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Human infirmity, in him, (as in Bible saints, and eminent christians in all ages,) had given a tinge to his religion, which, however, does not in him, or in the others just referred to, essentially detract from its genuineness, more than does an occasional spot upon the sun, or a dusky atmosphere through which that body is sometimes viewed, change the nature of the sun, or lessen our admiration of its enlightening and fructifying rays.

We say it is painful, though circumstances have made it necessary, to allude to this subject, it is vexatious in the extreme to hear that his piety has been subject ever to caricature, and by those too, from whom we should not have expected such remarks; the tendency of

which is calculated to lessen his influence in the community, by casting a shade of reproach not only upon him, but upon evangelical piety itself. It does most solemnly behove his friends and the friends of true piety, openly to protest against such aspersions. Truth and justice demand it, as well as the dearest interests of religion.

That the impenitent and worldly should be offended with his piety, accompanied as it was with so much scriptural preciseness and self-denial, and sacrifice, is not strange; unacquainted as they must be with the spirit of evangelical religion. That the christian, even, who has had but a slight acquaintance with his own heart, and but an ordinary sense of his responsibility to God; and of the immeasurable extent of that command, "Be ye holy for I am holy," should be unable fully to understand the several phases of Dr. Payson's spiritual life, as recorded in his diary and letters, is also to be expected.

It is, moreover, obvious to remark, that the interior life of every individual, will partake, in a greater or less degree, of constitutional temperament, in its complexion and development. Surrounding circumstances also may have much to do in forming the character of the spiritual man. In defence of his piety, we assert that there was nothing of the ascetic, or of the fanatic belonging to it, or of the mere pietist. His was not the cloister religion, which entombed itself, or which suffered the soul it inhabited to shrivel into the torpor of a dumb and inactive devotion. Devotional, in the highest and best sense of the word it was, yet the frequency of his visits to the heavenly world interrupted not his intercourse with the living world around him, but only quickened his steps in every effort of benevolence and mercy. A more active

or expansive, or well-directed good-will to man, relating either to their temporal or spiritual welfare, few have possessed. So far then as "the tree is known by its fruits," we are prepared to pronounce favorably upon the character of his practical as well as personal piety.

Again, let it be considered how peculiar was the structure of Dr. P.'s mind, — its keen perceptions, — its moral delicacy, — its extreme sensitiveness, — and such a mind brought under the influence of a clear and impressive conviction of the demands and prohibitions of the divine law. Consider his views of the vast responsibility of the ministerial work, and the value of the soul, — the importance he attached to sincerity in religion, and the desirableness of obtaining an "assurance of hope," both for himself and others; an assurance which he would have based upon a close and thorough examination of the subject. Then reflect upon the uncommon measure of his trials, arising from the power of "inbred sin," — himself a signal mark for the fiery darts of the wicked one. Let all this be borne in mind, and are we to wonder that his religious experience should be strongly marked, and peculiar in its complexion?

That any one could wish to have been in his place; to have groaned under such manifold infirmities; to have entered the field, and to have waged the combat with sin and satan, and disease, as he did, for the sake of the rewards of victory, is scarcely to be expected. What christian soldier but would have had his courage put to the severest test, on the day when such a proposal should be made. If, then, during the severity and long endurance of the struggle, he manfully buffeted the waves, faith and patience holding out even to the last, by what name shall we call this noble encounter other



than heroic piety ; and this distressing experience constituted much of the character of Dr. Payson's religion. Not that his spiritual life was one of unbroken or unceasing conflict, for his lucid intervals of peace and joy ineffable, were more abundant than falls to the lot of ordinary christians.

We have undertaken to show the individuality of Dr. P.'s piety — the characteristics essentially belonging to it ; and although it may not establish either precedent or example for others under different circumstances, yet its peculiarity deserves not censure, nor because of that, is its genuineness or utility to be suspected or condemned. Who is prepared to say that the fruits of such sufferings were not religion exemplified in its most exalted and noblest development ? That, inwrought with his experience there was an occasional gloom which might represent his religion in a somewhat unlovely and undesirable aspect, we do not deny. Hence the occasion which some have taken to cavil or to stumble at it, unwilling to make the distinction between what belonged to the *christian* and what to the *man*.

Let not the sombre cast of his piety be attributed to the grace of God, nor to the lack of it ; but let it be regarded as arising in part, from constitutional tendencies, but chiefly from the peculiar dispensation under which God had placed him. "If good men are sad," says an old writer, "it is not because they are *good*, but because they are *not better*." Let not the condemnatory sentence go forth from any if unable to account for the phenomena ; but rather let it be acknowledged that there was a necessity in the case of this individual ; that he should suffer much that he might, eventually, rejoice the more ; and that God laid upon him a burden, for the ac-



complishment of some gracious design, towards him ; or for the special benefit of the church at large. This conclusion is in agreement with his own views on the subject of discipline, as he once remarked when God had bereaved him of a dear child, that " the chastening was probably for the benefit of his church."

Dr. Payson's day has gone by, and much of the religion peculiar to it has, we fear, gone with it. A religion, the prominent features of which, and its influence upon himself and his church, and the community, generally, we have attempted to describe, and which in most respects, exerted a healthful and salutary influence. That it was of a truly evangelical and revival character, none can deny, who witnessed it. With few intermissions, a moderate revival was enjoyed during his entire ministry. Nor was the tendency of his preaching or example to make men misanthropes. It blocked up no avenue in the way to honorable preferment in society. It countenanced no incendiary attack upon public institutions, or men, or measures. It frowned upon no innocent amusement. It was most friendly to every measure conducive to the education of youth, to the quiet of neighborhoods, and to the soundest patriotism ; yet, at the same time, did it proclaim as from heaven, the paramount value of a treasure in the skies, and the importance of using every possible means of obtaining it, and at whatever effort or sacrifice.

Eminent examples of whatever was fair, and honorable, and lovely, and of good report, in public or private life, were found among his people ; lives read and known of all men, both then and now.

Dr. Payson's religious instructions did not spoil his people. They were not transformed into boors. The

adornments of intellectual culture, the kind reciprocities of social life, received no check from him either by precept or example. The professional man still shone in his profession. The mechanic still toiled on in his industry; the merchant carried the principles of his religion into the counting-house, and was an honest man at his ledger; the ship-master remembered the worship of the sanctuary, amid the calms and storms of the ocean, or the temptations of a foreign land. Many a beloved member of his flock treasured up his counsels for reflection and comfort, who, when called in Providence to sojourn in some distant part of the land, finds "how sweet their memory still;" and who now are able to gratify many a delighted listener who had known Dr. Payson only by report, with the recital of their pastor's virtues.\*

The matron, who had been feasted with spiritual food from her pastor on the Sabbath, felt its strengthening influence during the week, as she toiled amid her domestic cares, as she rocked the cradle of her sleeping infant, or hushed its cries upon her bosom. That child, dear to her heart, yesterday baptized by her beloved pastor, she baptized afresh with her tears of grateful piety, saying in her inmost prayer to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might

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\*NOTE. In a recent conversation with a very respectable lady, (once a member of his church) upon Dr. Payson's character and influence, she remarked to the writer, "While I resided at the far South, one day two young ladies, pious and accomplished, who lived two hundred miles away in the interior of the state, were visiting at our house. They had heard much of Dr. P., and had been delighted with his writings. By some means, having heard that I came from Portland, and was acquainted with him, and had heard him preach, they became exceedingly interested in all that I could say about a man of whose character they had formed so exalted an opinion."

live before Thee." And that child, and many such, nursed in the arms of piety, did live, do live,—now "plants of renown;" ornaments of the church of the living God.

Be sure it was an insinulative piety, like the "dew of herbs," and showers upon the tender grass, that penetrated every recess of the heart.

Was it not a guiding star to the young? Did it not sit gracefully and intelligently upon manhood's early prime? It smoothed and sobered the decline of life; shed its radiant light, and exerted its overcoming power in the chamber of death.

Such was the character of Dr. Payson's religion. Who will say it was not a model worthy of imitation for his own times, and for any times, inculcating as it did "whatsoever things were pure and lovely, and of good report."

The foregoing remarks were intended to explain and defend the character of Dr. Payson's piety. Is it still inquired, "Was his piety of a healthy tone, and desirable in itself? We further remark that if it had a tendency to repress intellectual and spiritual pride, to increase humility, to awaken a deeper sympathy for an impenitent world, it was desirable; and although acute mental sufferings accompanied it, yet, terminating as they did in a successful issue, and affording consolation to others in similar circumstances of doubt and darkness, as it certainly has done, and will do, we must regard it as a valuable piety. Or, if such piety thus strongly marked, created a holy atmosphere around him, and gave uncommon efficacy to his instructions; if the savor of it still lives in the memory and in the hearts of thousands, and as we believe, will to distant generations, must it not

be of a desirable stamp? To condemn it, therefore, or suspect its genuineness or its tendency, although mingled with some things of an infelicitous character, would be to speak against the operations of the Holy Ghost, by whose agency, we believe, it was kindled in his soul.

It is said, "we wish for a cheerful piety, and Dr. Payson's was not such; there is enough in the Gospel to constitute a *cheerful* piety." We readily grant it. There is everything of joy and consolation and hope there. A celestial paradise brightens upon the eye of faith, and we hope one day to walk its golden streets, and pluck its immortal fruits. But was Payson a stranger to such delightful anticipations? Was he favored with no Pisgah views of the delectable mountains? Did any one more frequently than he, or with a keener relish, drink from the wells of salvation? Does he record a momentary suspension of Divine influences, an interception of the the glorious sunshine of heaven? It proves how much he valued them. A sense of his own sins, or those of others, may have had a tendency to produce an occasional, though partial and transient eclipse. Amid the joys and triumphs, belonging to his own experience, he could not but have his heart saddened at times, with thoughts of a "world lying in wickedness." Was his a solitary example of this kind? Ask the psalmist why, at times, his flowing tears; the weeping prophet, why his strains of lamentation; the Son of God why his tenderest yearnings over Jerusalem? or the holiest and dearest of God's saints in every age, why they have sometimes been clothed in sackcloth? They have felt for the dishonor cast upon God and his law, and "rivers of waters ran down their eyes;" or they have "seen the end of the wicked;" and was there nothing in all these

things to affect the heart of ingenuous piety ? nothing, partially, at least, to dim the radiance of that sunlight which shines round about the path of God's saints. And there are wounds inflicted upon the heart of the sincerest piety, from many other causes, which cannot fail to mar the joy of the christian, privileged as he is, yea, assured as he is of his own acceptance with God : assurances, however, which will not prevent the falling tear over the miseries of man, or ease the aching heart. The sources of the christian's joy or grief, the world do not understand. The subject presents an enigma beyond their power to solve ; yet understood by the christian, in proportion to the depth and extent of his spiritual experience.



## CHAPTER X.

His weekly meetings for inquirers.—Church.—Fasts.—Conference and prayer meetings.—Incidents communicated by a correspondent.—Communion seasons.

We shall now accompany our pastor to the

### INQUIRY MEETING.

The writer was well acquainted with his manner of conducting these meetings during the earlier part of his ministry, being often present.

The company assembled in a large private parlor, (when the meetings were first established) which was crowded with the anxious, under different stages of conviction. Dr. Payson would seat himself by the side of each one in rotation, and in a low and inexpressibly tender and affectionate manner, inquire into the peculiar state of their feelings, to know what changes had been produced, since he last conversed with them; thereby ascertaining whether their special case required encouragement, or a more pungent application of the truth to the conscience. These meetings were as still as the house of death. Seldom was there one present, whose spirit was not lacerated and crushed with a sense of guilt, or who had not just emerged from spiritual death into the unspeakable joy of the new life in Christ.

In these meetings there was nothing formal; even as

to the reading of the Scriptures, or exhortation, as at other meetings, except it might be, occasionally, a few general remarks at the close of the meeting; nothing exciting, such as singing, or anything that would serve to divert the attention from the specific object of their coming together; nothing for the purpose of mere outward *effect*. The season was devoted to an inquiry into the state of each anxious or doubting individual, and the rendering, on the part of the pastor, that kind and sympathetic aid which their several cases demanded, and which his own experience, and knowledge of the heart, enabled him so ably and successfully to impart. A short and impressive prayer closed the interview.

Those seasons, and that "room," long occupied by anxious inquirers, will live in the recollections of very many, as the witnesses of deep anxiety, and of penitential and grateful tears—as the birth-place of their first holy emotions and purposes—it will be reverted to as the commencement of a spiritual life, that through Divine grace is seen developing in its progress the power of faith and love, down to this day, as exemplified in a humble and devoted christian life.

That "room," so kindly opened, and the scenes it witnessed, together with its humble proprietors, and the numerous inmates of the family, who were the willing fellow-laborers with their pastor, in the good work, most of whom are gone to their reward, will be had in affectionate and enduring remembrance.

Forty years have borne to tomb many of the loved of his flock; while some who were with him, young in their raven locks, now "changed to sober gray," still live, though bearing evidence that their pilgrimage must close at no distant period.

Later in his ministry, Dr. Payson adopted a somewhat different course of instruction with inquirers. He held meetings of a more public nature in the vestry, where he would meet any whose minds were awakened, though but slightly, when his remarks would be of a more general character. Perhaps none of his special meetings on the week-days were of more general utility, than these or drew so largely upon his mental resources, his experience, and powers of logic and illustration, in order to meet the variety of cases of persons in different stages of religious inquiry, whom he supposed might be present.

Many of the strikingly beautiful thoughts of comparison and illustration, afterwards published, were doubtless first conceived and uttered on these occasions. Meetings for the benefit of inquirers, were also held at the dwellings of some of his church members, conducted by the brethren who were experienced in these matters. This proved a pleasant and profitable exercise for those who conducted them, besides lessening the labors of the pastor.

Remarks a respected christian brother, who was in the habit of attending Dr. Payson's meetings for religious instruction, which were held at his own house — "The young men in town were exceedingly attached to him, and always deeply interested in his remarks. They would throng his house from all quarters, and they were from different religious societies, and glad to avail themselves of the privilege. How natural to imagine what a precious deposit of truth was thereby lodged in these opening minds; some, probably, sown among thorns, much of which, however, has doubtless proved like good seed, springing up to eternal life."

In reference to the meetings for young men, a correspondent remarks,—"I remember a remark he made in his

meetings for conversation with young men, of which I can give the substance. I think those who heard it may recall the circumstances. If the impression was as vivid as on my own mind, they cannot have forgotten the evening nor the incident. He was illustrating the difficulties in the way of the sinner's coming to Christ, and the necessity of striving to enter in at the straight gate. He related a dream; remarking, that, though the idea of making dreams the rule of life, or giving them a supernatural character, was wholly unfounded and ridiculous, yet it was by no means impossible or unreasonable that the great Author of mind might address man in "visions of the night," and make such impressions on the soul during sleep, as should further his gracious purposes. There was an estimable and amiable lady in his parish, who, for several years, had shown considerable interest in religious subjects, especially those that related to her own personal experience, but had never felt such a degree of assurance in her acceptance with God, as to unite with the visible church. She sought frequent opportunities to converse with him, but seemed to make no progress, remaining still in alternate hope and fear. She was ever seeking stronger evidence of her christian character, and for clearer light in the path of duty, but she found it not. One night she had a remarkable dream. The scene was laid in her native town. She was slowly walking the street, leading a little child by the hand. Her mind was engaged in the all-absorbing question of her acceptance with God. Her doubts, her difficulties, her anxieties were all presented to her view. As she thus walked slowly on in deep thought, some one met her, and told her that Jesus Christ was in town. She earnestly inquired where he might be found. The spot pointed out was at



some distance from the street in which she was walking. She, however, hastened on, still holding on to the little child. She marked the appearance of the people as she passed. But few seemed to be seeking the Savior. The great multitude were pursuing their business or pleasure, as eagerly as before the heavenly stranger came among them. She, however, hastened on, but was delayed at every step by the little child she was leading. She could not for a time let go its hands, but at length her anxiety became so great, that she left the child and ran unimpeded to meet the Savior. When she came to the spot, there was a multitude around him, and she had to push her way through, before she could reach his feet. He smiled upon her, as she approached, and took her by the hand with words of welcome. Then she was full of peace, — her doubts and fears all were gone. She sat some time enjoying his teachings, her eye constantly fixed on him, and her hands clasped in his, — her heart fixed on Christ alone. But after a while her eyes turned away, — she loosed her grasp on his hand, — she was gazing round in the crowd and watching the faces of the multitude. She, at length, observes, coming up on the other side, a hideous dragon, threatening to devour her. Trembling, she clung to the Savior, but his face was turned away. She looked around in fear and the monster came nearer. She was then ready to despair, and sought to lay hold of the Savior's hands, but in vain. In terror she seized the skirt of his garments, and he turned and smiled upon her, and her fears vanished. Upon this she awoke, and her mind, from that night, was strong in the faith of Christ. She lived in the blessed hope, and died in the calm assurance of acceptance by redeeming blood.



“ You can imagine, better than I can write, how Payson illustrated the phases of Christian experience by this dream. The presence of Christ in town illustrated his visits in seasons of repenting. The indifference of the multitude found its parallel in the conduct of the world in God’s hours of mercy. The lady was an example of one, seeking Jesus. The desire to find him, the obstacles that hindered her approach, are found in the case of every returning penitent. The little child retarded her steps, yet she was unwilling to give it up. So the sinner finds some worldly object holding him back, yet he is reluctant to break away from it. Her increasing and all-absorbing anxiety of spirit was shown by her breaking away from that child, and running to meet Jesus. So the burdened sinner shakes off every hindrance, and flies to the Savior. Then the welcome reception, — the sweet voice of mercy, — the unchanging fixedness of attention to every word, — all these indicate the hour of “ first love.” The subsequent distraction of mind, and its consequent fears, picture the relapsed state of religious feeling, and the doubts that darken the soul when the Savior’s countenance is withdrawn. The smile of Jesus, and the joy enkindled by it, are the pardon granted to the returning penitent, and the blessedness of forgiven sin. The whole lesson, (and how warmly and eloquently Payson enforced it,) is ‘ Seek Christ earnestly, — cleave to him closely, — and he will drive all fears and doubts away.’ I often recur to the impressions of that evening, as giving in one vivid picture, the full experience of a soul seeking, finding, and abiding in Christ.”

E. F. C.

## QUARTERLY FASTS.

These were held usually on the Friday before communion, in the vestry of the church. They occupied a few hours, commencing usually about eleven o'clock, A. M., and with a short intermission closing at three or four. They were never so protracted as to render the service tedious, yet the deep feeling which they elicited, was sometimes exhausting to the outward man.

It need scarcely be said that these seasons proved a source of uncommon religious enjoyment. No one who attended, with a right spirit, could fail to be quickened and greatly edified by them, or could ever forget, or think lightly of them. They were seasons of spiritual feasting, when the church were fed with "marrow and fatness."

The pastor, when present, always presided, — the brethren taking their several parts in the exercises. One brother after another, usually commencing with the officers of the church, would either read a hymn, or lead in prayer. A portion of scripture was then read by one of us, leaving it with the pastor to remark upon the passage. This respect and deference he always received at all similar meetings of the church. On these social occasions, no one was disposed "to take this honor upon himself; but he who was called of God as was Aaron."

Everything earthly seemed to dwindle into comparative insignificance, then

"What little things these worlds would be,"

as faith, growing stronger and stronger, would bring heaven down to our view. Never did Heaven seem so near, or spiritual glories assume such a deep reality, as

when present at these meetings; in comparison with which, no other occasions at that time, and no religious seasons of any description, since, have ever seemed like them in interest, or engraven upon the heart such vivid impressions of eternal objects.

No length of time can efface the remembrance of the scenes we there witnessed. Meet any of Dr. Payson's old church members, even at this late period; speak to them in reference to these special fasts, and you awaken reminiscences, which are as grateful to the heart, as "odors shaken from an angel's wing." They come over the memory as the music of an Æolian harp. The language of *one* who enjoyed these scenes is the language of *all*. A lady who was once a member of Dr. Payson's church, to whom the writer had intimated his design of making some reference in this way, to these quarterly fasts, remarked that "she wondered that no account of them had ever been published before."

Especially was the act of *renewing Covenant* with God, which usually concluded the exercises of the fast, of a most solemn and impressive character. No hypocrite could *live* in that room then. Die he must, with all his false hopes upon him, or arise with God's people, and "like a penitent, stand and confess his sin."

These meetings, as it may well be supposed, were seasons of misgiving, heart-searching and solemn resolutions, and entire consecration to God. We gave ourselves up to the potent influence with which the Holy Spirit seemed to surround us. We came in more fully and delightfully into the fellowship of the Spirit; we felt the bonds of the everlasting covenant drawing us not only nearer to God, but to one another. It was the communion of saints, as near like to that above as we can expect to

find on earth. In this act of renewed consecration to God, such confessions of sin as were made by our pastor in his characteristic, self-abasing language, and with such minute specification, and poured forth from his deeply affected heart, could scarcely fail to melt his church into penitence and love; while his fervent supplications for grace to enable them to maintain a closer walk with God; to go forth by the way of the cross to duty and to conflict, could scarcely fail of a gracious answer.

These seasons, while *we* had the privilege of attending them, never diminished in interest, or became formal, in any marked degree. They were not only intensely devotional, and occasions of much spiritual enjoyment, but they were practical in their tendency, — promotive of holiness of heart and life in the members, — and of shedding a savor of piety in the families and neighborhoods to which they respectively belonged.

His public Thursday evening lectures have already been alluded to; they were seldom omitted. A regular weekly meeting for conference and prayer was held in the vestry of his church, which he frequently attended. Like all other meetings where his presence was enjoyed, they were occasions of great interest. If he took a text to remark upon, or selected a portion of scripture to expound, the same characteristic spirit pervaded the whole exercise, as was observable in all his written and unwritten effusions.

It is obvious to remark that the members of any church (unconsciously perhaps to themselves,) are prone to imitate the style of their pastor in his spiritual exercises, especially in that of prayer. In a limited degree this was apparent in the members of Dr. Payson's church. They



caught a portion of his devotional spirit, so that strangers would see at once on hearing them pray, that they had been brought up at the feet of this "master in Israel."\* Yet a thorough and successful imitation was beyond the reach of any mortal man, for, as has been truly said, — "Who ever prayed like Payson?"

*Seasons of communion* at the Lord's table, as may be supposed, were much accounted of by him who was so tenderly alive to the value of the Savior's special visits. And in him, who brake to us the bread, and poured forth the emblem of a Savior's blood, we saw (as is seldom seen on such occasions,) the concentration of deep and holy thoughts; faith, in its clearest and boldest exhibi-

\* NOTE. A young lady from abroad who had heard much of Dr. Payson's eminent piety, once accompanied a member of his church to prayer meeting, (this was several years after Dr. Payson's death,) where she heard several individuals lead in prayer. On returning from meeting, she inquired of her friend "if those who offered prayer were not Dr. Payson's converts." Being answered in the affirmative, "I thought so," said she, "from the peculiarly solemn manner in which they prayed." The resemblance here alluded to is not attributable to any improper desire or effort, on the part of his church-members to *appear like Dr. Payson*, but was the natural result of having drunk *into* the spirit of the humbling doctrines he preached, by which their views had become in a measure assimilated to his. Something of his manner, moreover, may have become unintentionally impressed upon them.

"If I should ever pray," a man was once overheard to say, "I should wish to pray like Payson." "He seems to me," said another, "as a medium through which the Holy Ghost speaks." And why should not such remarks be made respecting his prayers? To pray like him, requires a basis of enlarged and elevated conceptions of the holiness of God, and a consequent deeper humiliation of soul and self-abasement than is ordinarily possessed by christians or ministers. "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit that is in him. Even so the things of God, knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." Yet the "abundant revelations," as in the Apostle's case, so in a measure in Dr. Payson's required "a thorn in the flesh," a messenger from Satan, to buffet him; a dispensation from God which they both felt to be necessary to their dying day.



tion, coupled with humility and penitential care. There was no mysticism about it; yet he made the service a very solemn one. "Christ, crucified," his most delightful theme, from one Sabbath to another, was made to hold a more conspicuous place in his remarks on these occasions; while his close and searching inquiries to the communicants—touching their own peculiar feelings towards Christ, (which are to be considered truly, as the grand test of discipleship,) often awakened a salutary fear respecting our good estate; yet, were his remarks eminently conducive to our spiritual benefit. The question of our Lord to Peter, pressed home upon the conscience—"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me"—we could not wave, and it was our own fault, if a consideration of the question, did not, either convict us of hypocrisy, or result in a hope, so that we could sincerely adopt the answer of that disciple. He had not the blind credulity of the Papist, yet he would have *all of Christ* present on such occasions which it was possible for a chastened imagination and a strong scriptural faith to bring down from heaven. And if ever Christ was shadowed forth and embodied in this sacred ordinance, it was when the precious emblems had been consecrated by the faith and prayer of our beloved pastor. Notwithstanding the searching scrutiny observed at these seasons, the humble and penitent had nothing to dread. A spirit of the tenderest sympathy was diffused over the whole scene. The humble and sincere communicant retired with a strengthened hope, and if with a trembling, yet was it a more confiding hold upon his Savior, and with a deeper impression of the grand realities of religion and eternity; a result which always followed his faithful yet tender remarks.

Writes one, "I became connected with his church on the last Sabbath that he entered the sanctuary. I well remember his appearance that day, his emaciated frame and feeble step; but his spirit and voice were all untouched by disease, as he welcomed us to the communion of the body and blood of Christ. That scene will never fade from the memory. It must always be associated, in my mind, with Dr. Payson's triumphant death."

E. F. C.

## CHAPTER XI.

Other special qualities of Dr. Payson, as a pastor.—His eminence as a spiritual anatomist.—His tenderness for the weak of his flock.—An instance in point.—Yet, very faithful in giving rebuke when needed.—Examples.—His freedom from eccentricity.—His hatred to it in others.—An anecdote.

His profound self-knowledge gave him vast power and adroitness in scanning the character of others. He was entirely at home in this most valuable kind of ministerial tact.

As he who has thoroughly and minutely examined the internal mechanism of a single watch, derives a far more accurate insight into its structure and movements than he who transiently gazes at a thousand in the shop-window of the manufacturer, so he, who under the deep and complicated vicissitudes of the spiritual life has been compelled to take special cognizance of the workings of his own heart, is thereby better qualified than the mere superficial observer, to analyze the hearts of others. Perhaps no experience of tribulation or temptation, could be mentioned to him by any distressed believer, but he could say, "I have been there before you; you have not trodden the wine-press alone."

Dr. Cummings, the compiler of "Payson's Memoir," recently remarked to the writer, in substance, that, "from high authority, the expediency of his giving pub-

licity to those direful passages respecting Payson's experience, was questioned, if not condemned." Yet the judgement of Dr. Cummings, in this matter, has been found to be judicious, from the abundant testimony we have, that persons under similar trials with Dr. Payson, have derived great benefit from this part of his published experience.\*

Painful as it is, to read of the trials, conflicts and temptations, and the out-break of the heart's corruptions, even of the Bible-saints, yet the record affords sympathy and encouragement to the down-cast believer of every age; indeed, such examples often afford him the only hope he has that he can be a child of God. In all their heart-troubles, they might repair to their pastor with an assurance, that so far as human ability and sympathy could avail, they would receive such direction and relief from his words, as would light up in their souls the dying lamp of hope, and send them on their way, humbly rejoicing.

"It is therefore of unspeakable importance," says an eminent †Divine, "that ministers of the Gospel, who have to deal with diseased consciences should have had some experience themselves in these matters. This, no doubt is one reason, why some intended to be "sons of consolation" to others, have been brought through deep waters, and have been buffeted by many storms, before they obtained a settled peace of mind. *It is a proper*

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\*NOTE. "Now when they were gone over the stile," says Bunyan, "they began to contrive with themselves, what they should do at that stile, to prevent others who should come after from falling into the hands of Giant Despair—and they wrote,—over this stile is the way to Doubting Castle,—many therefore, that followed after, read what was written, and escaped the danger."  
—*Pil. Prog.*

† Dr. Alexander, on Religious Experience, page 52.

*object of inquiry, why, in our day, so little is heard about the spiritual troubles, of which we read so much in the casuistical treatises of writers of a former age. It can scarcely be supposed that the faith of modern christians is so much stronger than that of believers who lived in other days, that they are enabled easily to triumph over their melancholy fears and despondency. Neither can we suppose that Satan is less busy in casting his fiery darts, and in his attempts to drive the children of God to despair. There is reason to fear, that among christians of the present time, there is less deep spiritual exercise, than in former days; and as little is said on this subject in public discourses, there may be greater concealment of the troubles of this kind, than if these subjects were more frequently discussed."*

It would be judged superhuman and contrary to all analogy or precedent, to expect that any pastor may not be liable to be deceived, or to misjudge respecting the spiritual concerns of his flock. Yet we feel a becoming confidence in asserting that, with Dr. P.'s knowledge of the Scriptures, and his deep personal experience in the things of God, he was better qualified than most others, in deciding upon the character of the impenitent under different stages of conviction, or of the hopeful new convert just emerging from darkness, or of a christian in an advanced state, under the hidings of God's face, or astray from the fold. The method he pursued with different characters was always judicious. He made not his own experience the sole standard by which he judged of others, on whose hearts, perhaps, the lines of the Spirit's work might have been less distinctly drawn. He was governed in practice by the New Testament rule: "There are many diversities of the same spirit, but it is the same God who worketh all in all."



He cherished hope respecting any one in whom he could discern the faintest evidence of the spirit of humility and penitence. After preaching from Ezekiel 34: 16, — “I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick ; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, I will feed them with judgment,” a member of his church went to him expressing her fears with respect to the genuineness of her christian hope. He replied, “No matter what you are, if you are not one of the *fat and the strong*,” i. e., among the self-confident and self-dependent.

Yet in his ministry, he was faithful to the souls of his people. If the hypocrite held on to his hope, it was in spite of admonitions as pungent as ever issued from the pulpit. Deep indeed must have been the spiritual lethargy of that professor who could slumber under his searching ministry. If spiritual life did not revive in any individual of his church, there was sad evidence of a “tree twice dead, plucked up by the roots.” By his close dealing with his church, when he first came to them, many professors had their hopes shaken ; some had them destroyed altogether. Yet no one loved him less for this seeming severity. Like the rod in the hand of a faithful yet affectionate parent, it fell, accompanied with the sympathy and tears of him who held it. We felt that the reproof was a part of the discipline we needed ; as only “an excellent oil that shall not break my head.”

“He chid our wanderings, but relieved our pains.”

His addresses to the impenitent, no less than to the church, were impregnated with so much genuine affection, that their tendency was to melt, rather than to exasperate.

Himself "a stricken deer, hit by the archers," often bleeding and smarting under a wounded spirit, he tenderly dealt with those who needed the knife or the caustic.

The reproof needful he did not withhold when occasion required it. He was a safe pattern to follow in administering reproof. The writer once had the blessing of sitting for one from him. The manner in which it was given was so kind and affectionate, yet manly and christian, that as a model or a chastening it never need be forgotten. The following instance of his faithfulness in reproving a young lady,—a delinquent church-member,—has been related to me by one who was acquainted with the fact.

Owing to some change of her position in society, the lady referred to had absented herself from public worship and other meetings of the church. Dr. Payson was aware of her criminal neglect in this respect, but owing to the inconvenience of seeing her alone, he had no opportunity to converse with her. He was one day passing along the street, (probably a retired one,) and noticed a female approaching him, whom he soon perceived to be the absentee. He kept his eye upon her, but soon found that she was crossing over to the opposite side of the street, for she had recognized him, and with a conscience ill at ease, was rather disposed to avoid an interview with her pastor. Nothing daunted, however, and somewhat indecorous or ungallant, as it might appear, Dr. P. choosing to meet her on her own ground, crossed over, so that a collision (harmless though it were,) must inevitably take place, and there seemed no help for the lady delinquent. The language of Ahab to the prophet,—"Hast thou found me, O mine enemy," might very probably have been in agreement with her feelings at

that moment. But she was caught. They met. Said Dr. Payson, accosting her, "Is it possible that it has come to this, that you crossed over the street just now to escape an interview with me?" "I could not utter a falsehood," said she to the person who related the incident to me; I confessed it to be as he had conjectured. It was an awkward predicament in which they both were placed, and unpleasant feelings doubtless arose in their minds, and yet the happiest results would be likely to follow; to him the satisfaction of having performed an unpleasant duty, and to her, a recovery from the path of error. His street-preaching in this case might be more effectual than twenty sermons from the pulpit. The seed sown by the way-side, Satan does not always pick up. He promised to call at her house.

Eccentricity, he had none himself, and he despised it in others. It is not asserted that he did not possess strong peculiarities, and marked and distinctive traits of character, resoluteness in purpose, and perseverance in the right, when his mind was once made up. Such a mind as his *must* possess these sterling, heart-of-oak qualities. Yet that affectation of superior wisdom, which manifests itself in freaks of oddity; to show off opinion, or to bespeak self-importance; even to be as much *unlike* other people as possible, in order to court notoriety, and applause, (sometimes seen in ministers of decided piety), Dr. Payson equally avoided and detested.

A good minister of Jesus Christ, although noted for his eccentricity, on a journey, called at the house of Mr. Payson, (as was more customary in those days than now,) for entertainment. He had spent the *night*, but early in the morning, arose and went out, probably to obtain his breakfast elsewhere. This, what might be considered as

rather heterodox, or a violation of ministerial etiquette, met, of course, the decided disapproval of his host.

When he returned, Mr. Payson said to him, good-naturedly, no doubt, "Sit down, sir, and I will tell you how odd you are." We are not informed of all that followed from the reproof so well deserved, and coming from so distinguished a person, but we are willing to believe that this "righteous smiting" was of essential benefit to the young ministerial brother.

## CHAPTER XII.

His conversational powers—His prolific mental resources—Dr Cheever's remarks—He sought no monopoly in the social circle. The strong attachment of his people not lessened by time nor circumstances.

"Imagination," remarks Dr. Johnson, "is to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in—a wilderness of thought in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odor."

Dr. Payson was conversable and sufficiently familiar on all suitable subjects and occasions; but not voluble or talkative. He no more had words nor thoughts to throw away, than time.

His sermons abounded with splendid descriptions and illustrations, but in common anecdotic remarks, he seldom indulged, in any of his public performances; although he could sometimes amuse you by relating an anecdote in conversation.

He possessed, in a very high degree of perfection, the qualities that constitute the full, the correct and the ready man; and no one was more adroit in wielding the power these qualities conferred, or in employing it to a more valuable purpose.

Although he was naturally unobtrusive and exceedingly diffident, yet when occasion demanded, he was equal to the emergency, and was always the willing and able champion of truth; although not the noisy declaimer,



waiting for an opportunity as a gladiator, or as a boxer, to show off his pugilistic skill.

Pleasantly and profitably he would converse with you at his own fireside—in the parlor, or in his study ; although he would sometimes have his patience tried with such dunces, as some of us were, who called upon him.

We knew he had a kind, sympathetic heart, and could make allowance for our comparative ignorance ; yet it is no wonder that we felt *very* small by his side.

There was an uncommon richness of vein in his conversation, such as I never knew any other person to possess. There was a combination of several rare qualities which gave a zest and an interest to his colloquial discourse, which charmed the attention and captivated the hearts of the listeners. It was a fascination, innocent as is possible, in its character. You were held fast by it. It was not the serpent wile to decoy the unsuspecting, and to betray to ruin ; but rather to allure and to draw you from the “ snare of the fowler ” to the heavenly charmer. He possessed a store of intellectual wealth, and he knew where to find it. He had but to touch a spring, or turn a key, and his hand is already among gold and diamonds. Gems of spiritual and mental beauty are at once brought forth to enrich his public discourses, or to lend brilliancy and enchantment to his conversation. Remarks an eminent living writer,\* referring to Dr. Payson’s conversational powers, “ As a songster from a cage, his thoughts flew from him in every possible variety of beauty and harmony like birds from a South American forest ; ” an illustration of great fitness and significance in its application to Dr. Payson.

There was no exhausting his intellectual resources ;

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\* Rev. Dr. Cheever.

and in aptness and power of illustration, he has been seldom equalled. Here was the secret of that influence, by which he held the concentrated attention of any company which he addressed. It was not then, as now, where in a social gathering, there are almost as many speakers as hearers. When he spake "they answered not again."\* Nor did he urge any claim for a monopoly of the conversation. So far from it, we believe, that it was an act of self-denial in him to take the lead in conversation. The company gladly awarded this precedence to him, as his prerogative, and esteemed it their privilege to do so. It was not an assumption of the office of chief speaker on his part; and on ours, it was a deference of the heart as well as the understanding to his superior wisdom. "His doctrine dropped as the rain and distilled as the dew."

"On a very few occasions," writes our correspondent, "did I spend an evening in company where Dr. P. was present. On these occasions, he did not converse with individuals, but occupied pretty much the whole time with his remarks, which constitute a sort of parlor lecture. To make the meeting pleasant and profitable, he seemed to task his powers of invention, and of agreeable illustration. Conversing with himself and Mrs. Payson on the

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\* Dr. Payson was not in favor of there being more than one minister present at a private meeting where religious conversation was expected. This preference was not from any despotic principle in him. He had found that when two or more ministers were present, it rather hindered than promoted the interest of the meeting; that they were in each others way; and that one would wait for the other to speak, either from diffidence or some other cause, and that if there were but one minister present, his duty would be apparent; he would be expected to take the lead of the conversation, and could do it. Mr. Cecil, when he would address a company of children, would have none but children present, that he might be under no restraint, and under no temptation to adopt a style of remark above the capacity of children.

effort he sometimes had to make to attend at an evening visit, that was expected of him, Mrs. P. observed that sometimes he felt constrained to attend to the duty, when, so far as his comfort was concerned, he would have preferred to give a considerable sum of money to be relieved. His manner of conversing, rather of discoursing, in his visits, would account for the fact of the service being so burdensome.”

C. F.

He was conscientious in observing this economy and improvement of time. No half-hour of such an interview was devoted to the common topics of secular news, or to popular questions.

With his peculiar views of the dignity of the ministerial office, he could never sink the minister into the mere politician, financier, or man of the world.

Incidentally he might deviate from his accustomed course, to win upon an individual, and thereby attract his notice to subjects that related to his spiritual interests. As a servant of Jesus Christ, he understood and appreciated the exclusive duties belonging to his vocation. This high-minded consistency and supreme devotedness to his calling, his people appreciated and approved; and it only augmented their respect for him. They saw the bent of his heart in his holy aims and endeavors, and they deemed it little less than sacrilege to attempt to divert him from his high purpose.

We supposed he knew, in his own case, what was suitable for him to be and to do. As one set apart to “serve at the altar,” he saw, as every consistent minister must, that whatever would encroach upon his peculiar sphere was a “grand impertinence.”

We saw in him no desire to “lord it over God’s heri-

tage." The advancement of his people in holiness and happiness was the highest object of his pursuit.

"He drew them as with the cords of love, and with the bands of a man." If he laid upon them a yoke or a burden, no one complained: the yoke was always considered easy, and the burden light; submitted to, by us, from choice, rather than necessity or compulsion; himself, always the pattern.

"He soared to brighter worlds, and led the way."

How pleasant to record that the lapse of years abated not an iota of his people's respect and affection towards him. For them, he wasted under infirmities of body; for them were his noblest energies employed, both of early and later life; and as the sun in his going down, casts its mellow, yet undiminished rays upon the surrounding landscape, so vanished he from our sight, sinking in his full-orbed lustre, to rise in brighter worlds.

Great as his uncommon popularity among his people was, and mysterious as the fact may appear to many at the present day, yet to us it is no mystery. His very name now awakens in our minds the most precious and grateful recollections. An echo to all we have said of him is heard still, loud and unsuppressed, in the hearts of his surviving friends.

And yet we are compelled to believe that there are those who question whether the religious influence which he exerted among his people or in the community generally, would, upon the whole, now be desirable. They judge his religion to be over precise, and of too puritanical a stamp, and uncongenial to the spirit of the age. There would probably be misgivings accompanying the prayer for a revival of religion of such a character. And yet Payson and his times are not the only ones supposed



to be liable to objection. By such a standard of judgment, would not Baxter and Bunyan, President Edwards, and David Brainard, and their times be accounted as undesirable? Would they not fall under like suspicion or rebuke?

In the foregoing remarks, we do not cast a single reflection upon the piety of the present day. We are aware that religion has new phases. The outlet from the fountain has found other channels of beneficence and love and zeal, wherewith its blessings are diffused over the land and the world. It is a piety still, whose odors are as precious as when it first bloomed upon the valleys and mountain-tops of Judea. Such a piety tells of Calvary and the Cross, and baptized into the spirit of its Divine Founder, we predict it will never lose its resemblance to the grand original. "Wisdom hath builded her house in our land." Scattered over our wide domain, magnificent, because simple, ten thousand altars and their priests beautify and adorn her courts. The incense of a sincere piety goeth up to heaven therefrom. The people of the living God have brought their gifts; noble offerings of sons and of daughters, of wealth and influence; of splendid intellects, and burning hearts and quenchless zeal. They are "the gold and frankincense and myrrh" laid down at the feet of their Redeemer. The compassion for dying pagans, kindled in the hearts of Samuel J. Mills, and his worthy coadjutors, as they meditated upon the love of Christ, and the obligations which that love imposes, has pervaded our churches, and colleges, and seminaries.

Under its god-like influence, her hundreds of devoted missionaries have sought their last earthly home among the untutored and idolatrous races of the East and the West. "The isles which have waited for Gods' law,"



are receiving it at their hands ; and while our fathers read in that law of the “glorious things *spoken* of thee, thou Zion, city of our God ;” their sons are reading in the unmistakable signs of the times, its wondrous fulfilment. And yet with all these concessions, may not the prayer still go up to heaven, for a more spiritual church ; that God would give to us more of such men as Owen, and Whitefield, and Scott, and Jay, and Payson, and grant us the peculiar blessings of their times. Devoted and humble as are many of the incumbents of our pulpits, what one of them would not prize higher than gold, the mantle of Philip Doddridge, or Leigh Richmond. Lives there a missionary, however self-sacrificing or successful he now is, or may have been, who does not sigh to have more of his spirit, who sacrificed health and comfort and life itself, to promote the salvation of the aborigines of our New-England wilderness ? or who would not deem it an honor greater than man can bestow, to be like him who closed his martyr-life upon the plains of Persia ; or to follow in the honorable yet suffering path of the man who gave to the millions of Burmah and the East, the translated word of life, and then sank to his ocean-grave ? And what minister of the present day, who has read of the labors of love, and the result of those labors, and the reward of those labors, as seen in the “Dying Thoughts” of Payson, would not desire that not only his own last days, but that all his days might be like his ? and what church, however enriched it may now be with some bright ascension-gift as its pastor, that would not esteem it a privilege indeed to sit under a ministry like Dr. Payson’s ? \*

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\* Rev. Dr. Alexander, of Princeton, in selecting three striking examples of the power of religion as exemplified in the dying hour has made choice of Dr. Payson as one of them, and the candid

What community that can appreciate the value of religious truth, as exerting an unwonted power over the consciences and hearts of men; dissipating a worldly spirit; that could make heaven and hell appear in all their solemn reality, and could see their ministers stand confessed, as such exemplifying in their own conduct all that they professed and taught to others, as Payson did, but would desire such a man, and such a ministry, and pray for the revival of such a ministry, and the return of such times?

Where is room for envy? None; as there is none for boasting. God made Dr. Payson all that he was, and God made his times such as they were; for were they not "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," and every humble supplicant who utters now the prayer, "O Lord, revive thy work," is only praying for the Spirit of God to come down to dwell more largely in the hearts of his ministers, and bless the churches and the world with a greater affluence of his grace, even as he blessed former ministers and people.

Be sure the last man would Dr. Payson have been, to place to his own credit any thing which God might have accomplished through his instrumentality, as would his people then or now, be the last to boast of their privileges, for we speak a good and a true word for them when we say that they felt their unworthiness of their privileges, and deep self-condemnation that they were not made bet-

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reader will acknowledge that judging from his "Dying Thoughts" already published, of his views of the soul and eternity that, in point of interest, they are not eclipsed by either of the other instances adduced. "No man in our country, writes Dr. Alexander, has left behind him a higher character for piety, than the Rev. Edward Payson." In introducing his narrative of "Death-bed Scenes," he remarks "I propose to select the experiences of men of different countries, those who were eminent in the church, and distinguished for talents."

ter by them. "Thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell, for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it had repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes."

There is a remnant "who are crying and sighing" for the return of a period when vital godliness did more abound; deeper seriousness in religion, and less conformity to the world. We look into the hearts of Payson's surviving church members, and others of the same period, and we hear them exclaim: "God speed the day" and they say it not with an invidious, but with most respectful spirit towards those whose ministrations they now enjoy.

"Our souls shall pray for Zion still."

For her are our choicest sympathies enlisted; suffering as she still is under the pressure of worldliness; the promulgation of false doctrine, and mourning under so great a dearth of the special influences of the spirit. We would share our proportion of the obloquy and scorn which a cold, ungrateful and infidel world is casting upon the church,—rejoicing always that "He who is in the midst of her is mighty," and that He will help her, and that right early.

We cannot hope to escape the charge of an over-weening attachment to a by-gone religion, yet we do love to contemplate the piety of the olden times—the giants of those days, and their writings, and their hearts' deep experience in the things of God, portrayed therein. We estimate such men and their writings as the smith does the ancient coins or plate that has come down from other generations, worn, but unadulterated, while he exclaims, as he weighs it in his hand, "here is the precious, purer

metal, bring me such as this ;" as we do much of the devotional poetry of a past age (which no modern fashion has been able to improve though often attempted,) full of thought and feeling. We love a piety that will burn and brighten amid the darkness of abounding error ; that shall make its way along through the forces and fashions of the world's compactest and strongest influence, and unmoved by its most fascinating blandishments ; a piety, the spirit of which in the social meeting, or in the closet, can commune devoutly with the spirit of Watts, and sing with him in that beautiful stanzas of his :

“ My willing soul would stay  
In such a frame as this,  
And sit and sing herself a way  
To everlasting bliss.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

Would Dr. P. have sustained his eminence in the ministry, had he been continued to the present day? — Was his influence not only salutary, but enduring? — Would he have been a suitable minister for the times? — Dr. P., remarkably free from any signs of mental imbecility.—His influence great and salutary among his people during his life — and afterwards, as appears from the general religious character of those who survived him.— He had a living, praying church.—Early brought into the harness. The effect of his Sabbath labors apparent during the week afterwards.—Anecdote of a lady, in point:—

It has been questioned whether Dr. Payson would have been able to maintain his former position among the preachers of the present day, or whether the influence of his ministrations would have been as great now as formerly.

It is a problem, from the nature of the case, not to be solved with entire certainty or satisfaction. The future of every man's history is necessarily involved in doubt. None can pronounce with assurance what a man will be at sixty or seventy, from what he is at forty; or how mournfully one day, even, may tell upon his destiny, so that his dishonored name shall not be written in the dust. How like Sampson he may go forth, shorn of his locks, and only to discover his prostrate moral or intellectual strength.

Yet from analogy and from scripture it may be fair and safe to infer that the christian graces, so eminently



bright in him, and which sustained him through every change of storm and calm and sunshine in his religious life, would flourish still, and increase even as the "light of the morning, more and more to the perfect day;" and that had his divine master added twenty years to his life, he might have kept him still holy and humble. We have no warrant to believe that his influence would be *less*, were his voice again to be heard among the living; although in view of circumstances that are possible, the zenith of his usefulness may have been reached, and the chronicles of his future history might have told of disappointment and defeat.

No man more than he, would more fully abide by the sentiment, that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." None could more feelingly pray, "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe," or say, "by the grace of God, I am what I am."

It is still, however, doubted by some, whether, had his life been continued, his influence would have been as controlling over the public mind, as it had been during his previous ministry — whether amid the conflicting elements, which now agitate the religious and civil community, even a Payson could have maintained his wonted and enviable position as a public teacher. Yet the inquiry returns, why are we to doubt in *his* case more than in others, eminent in the various professions, who, though advanced in years, have not outlived their popularity, or those who have been renowned for their piety, and are still "bearing fruit in old age." No change of times or sentiments, no convulsions in the community, have been able to diminish their popularity and usefulness. The present generation are ready to acknowledge the merit of those now great and good, who have come down from

a past age. Even to advanced years, there was no waning in the popularity of a Wordsworth, or a Montgomery — of a Chalmers, a Wardlaw; in a Cleaveland, Silliman, an Adams, a Clay, or a Webster. Such men moulded and controlled, more or less, the times in which they lived; in poetry, in politics, in philosophy and religion.

Would Dr. Payson have been an exception? Falling upon these times, volatile and restless as they may be, would he not still, like a star in the firmament, have kept shining on in the reflected lustre of his Divine Lord; the admiration of the *children* as he once had been of their *fathers*? Or if it be said that it was *novelty* which gave him such precedence above others in celebrity and fame; still we think that a period of twenty years of unwaning popularity, would have been sufficient to settle that question upon a sure foundation: for the last year of his life found him as popular as he ever had been.

Had he owed his celebrity to mere novelty, it had passed away with the early years of his ministry, which, as is admitted by all, was very far from being the case.

But it is said that when he commenced his pulpit labors in Portland, he was almost alone in the field, and having but few rivals to compete with, and men of his stamp as preachers, rare, he rose to more eminent distinction on that account. But other lights were gradually introduced into his neighborhood, and brilliant ones they were, yet he was not eclipsed by the brightest of them; and had he lived at the present day, he would no doubt have held his own in the view of a discerning community.

It is said that the present generation abounds in learned and accomplished divines. Granted. So did the times in which he lived. Is it said that therefore he would have been eclipsed? Doubted. Pure gold is always the

same. True merit never cheapens. Talents and piety, men of every age will always estimate by the same standard. He never passed for more than he was worth, nor would he ever have passed for less.

But it is said that such is the genius of the present age, that piety like his, and the truth as he was wont to proclaim it, so pointed and so direct, would rather be condemned than appreciated ; the world would not bear it now.

More stress is laid on this argument by the incredulous than on any other. Yet we deem it a vain assumption, and founded upon no principle of our nature ; not in agreement with analogy or the Bible. He rose to eminence at a time of general stupidity in religion, and when the most liberal religious views prevailed ; and amid the rough blasts of adverse influences. He weathered the storm, he endured the calm then. He preached boldly the whole truth *then*, “ no man forbidding him,” and won for himself a martyr’s name. The laurels upon his brow would have been flourishing in old age.

His personal friends who survive him, agree with us in our position. Said a gentleman, (who knew and loved him well,) to the writer, while present at the meeting of the American Board in Portland, (we stood in the porch of the church, viewing the immense crowd, which the occasion had called together,) “ what an interest would Dr. Payson have given to such a meeting as this.” There could be no exception to the highly interesting manner in which that meeting was conducted, comprising as it did, ministers and laymen of the first respectability in our land. Yet our heart felt no misgivings in yielding its full assent to the truth of the above remark ; a remark, which, had it been overheard by all of that vast assembly,

would not have provoked one envious or dissentient feeling ; for what one was there who had not known or heard of Payson ?

Dr. Payson discovered no signs of mental imbecility as he advanced in years. He never flagged in any of his literary productions or pulpit performances. He acquired a maturity of mind at a very early age, and it would seem to be the design of Providence that it should be so, in view of his brief sojourn upon the earth. In the latter part of his life, there appeared in his sermons and conversations more of ripeness and mellowness, but not less of intellectual power, or ardent and active piety. His energies knew no slumbering. And yet his popular “Address on Music,” alluded to, which he delivered in the early part of his ministry, probably could not have been surpassed in intellectual vigor or beautiful illustration, at any subsequent period of his life.

Nor that he was less a workman, or that his stock of materials became exhausted, or diminished even, but as the ship builder who launches his bark, and sees her in her appointed element a “thing of beauty,” attracting the attention of every beholder for her admirable model and finish, *may not do better* ; yet still possessing the ability and resources to *do as well* ; can produce another and another, materially the same in excellency of architecture, and in any variety—so Dr. Payson with his model still in his own possession, and with versatility of talent, and universality of genius, could bring forth his mental products in great variety and excellence. In a word, he could prepare a discourse that would charm and instruct, equally the most learned or illiterate audience.

Like Handel or Haydn who could compose an



“ Oratorio” to enrapture the accomplished amateur ; or set to music a ballad for the sailor, to beguile the hours of his “ watch on deck,” or for the shepherd-boy as he watched his flock by night, or a hymn of comfort for the heart of the devout saint in his outburst of piety , or to awake to an honest patriotism the soldier who must march at the break of day to-morrow for the battle-field.

But the question is still urged, “ Would Dr. Payson have been a suitable minister for the times ?” “ Would he have kept pace with them ?” There may be some difficulty we say, in satisfactorily answering the question. How far the present times may have outstripped common sense, and the conversation of the good old times ; with what effrontery they would outstare the modesty and shamefacedness which once gave beauty and correctness of complexion to customs and observances which in their native simplicity were handed down from our ancestors : to what extent the present times have urged upon us for our acceptance and adoption, their new fangles in science, politics or religion, must first be considered.

It would indeed be curious to know what the present times require in a minister of the Gospel, that past times did not demand. Must he be more of a novel reader, or a more finished ladies’ man ; a lover of light and vain company ? Must he make a greater flourish in the street or in the pulpit ? or must he be more brief in his public prayers, and never exceed twenty minutes in his sermon ? Must he so “ preach as to please men,” must he divest the Gospel of its peculiar doctrines, and give his people instead, an unsound philosophy ?

If so, we venture to affirm that Dr. Payson could not have so far abandoned the Bible standard of a true min-



ister of Jesus Christ ; he could not have so lost sight of the responsibility of his office, and of the value of immortal souls as to have suited himself to such times ; unless it were to be in God's hand as a reprover. There was nothing in Dr. Payson's religion or general character as a man or a preacher, that was not suitable for *all times* ; that would not have commanded the respect of all times.

But it is said, everything is now changing or changed : standards are changed and tastes in music, in painting, in architecture, in dress, in language, in manners ; another age with all its improvements has dawned upon us. Yes, they say, Dr. Payson was right for his times ; his religious cast suited his own day ; but would the people now endure the out-spoken truthfulness, direct and pointed as it flowed from his lips, thirty or forty years ago ; or accept such a manner of lips as he enjoined upon his people, and of which he set so holy and uniform an example ? But we ask, would President Edwards, or Nettleton, or Bunyan, or Baxter even, be acceptable ministers at the present day, could they stand in our pulpits, walk in our streets, or visit at our firesides ? Venerable men ! may God forgive the shadow of such a suspicion.

But *why* would not such men as Payson and his contemporaries, or his predecessors of a former century be acceptable even now ? Has God changed ? Has the Bible ? or truth ? or heaven, or hell, or the way that leads there ? If not, then Dr. Payson and the worthies just mentioned would be just the men for these times ; just such men as a slumbering church and a dying world are calling aloud for. God's truth is established, in an unbroken harmony. A thousand years ago or a thousand years to come, it admits of no change. As well might it

be expected that God will "break his covenant with the day and the night," as that He will disrobe his peculiar character of its glory, or waver in one iota in his requirements. And this not more in the essential ordinances of religion, than in the ordinances of nature. If the prosperity of religion demanded such men as Payson, in the day in which he lived, it demands just such now. If God blessed the clear and unflinching enunciation of truth *then*, He would do it *now*. The same self-denial and sacrifice which he once demanded from his ministers, he demands now. We *understand* the hint that is often thrown out that "such a minister is behind the times." There may be those who by their apathy and indolence have exposed themselves to such an imputation. We have no disposition to defend such. In health, and surrounded with opportunities for ministerial usefulness and for the improvement of his mind, with his pen and his books, there is no excuse for a minister to "go to seed," or rust out. Such *are* behind the times. Their imbecility will be apparent in their yellow manuscripts which they expose in the pulpit. A minister needs to be "ground over" again, and his sermons too, if he is giving his people from sabbath to sabbath principally, sermons that were elaborated twenty or thirty years ago. Such men are not only behind the times, but are living behind their duty and their privileges. *Advanced age*, merely, need not, should not, incur this reproach. Father Sewall was, and Father Sawyer and Dr. L. Beecher are now, noble examples of "old men eloquent," their powers still sustained in vigor by constant use. Who would have dared to tell General Washington or Benjamin Franklin, even in their latest days, that they were behind the times, and no longer fit for usefulness, or would say, retire and make room for your

juniors, better qualified for the service ? Would you have hinted to Henry Clay or Daniel Webster, or a Wellington or a Harrison, that having come from a past age, imbecility and inefficiency have sunk you below the level of present expectations and exigencies ? How much rather ought the wisdom and experience, which men in all the professions, bring along with them, to be respected and appreciated.

Dr. Payson was remarkably free from any liability to such a charge as we have been considering, even in his last years, though they were years of great bodily infirmities. He was always advancing in knowledge, growing in grace, and in everything that would increase his usefulness in the ministry, to the very last. Not an indolent atom was there in his body or mind. Such a course as he adopted and loved, he would doubtless have persevered in ; and coming upon these times, or to the most distant future which he might have been spared to see, he would have stood up in a fulness and maturity of stature, as an ambassador for Christ, in vigor of intellect undiminished, and in zeal, pure and unquenched.

At times we are ready almost to say, Would that his Great Master had lent to the church militant, this ascension gift, a while longer ; that instead of being removed at the noon of life, he might have continued his labors until he had numbered his threescore years and ten.— Yet how cruel the wish ; when he panted even at the early period of his exit, to “ rise and take his crown.”— Yet it is a luxury of thought to dwell, even in imagination, upon the rich resources he would have accumulated, had a double period of ministerial life been granted, of reading, and reflective observation and experience, for the benefit of the churches, in these days and in all com-

ing time. But his "mortal must put on immortality."

Gone is that light, not *quench'd* or *riven* ;  
But burning, shining on, in heaven.

" We priz'd every hour that went by,  
Beyond all that pleased us before ;  
But now they are gone, and we sigh,  
And we grieve that we priz'd them no more."

Was Dr. Payson's influence not only salutary, but *enduring* ?

Blest with the ministry of one so eminently endowed both by nature and grace as was our Pastor, it might be expected that we should be a well-instructed people "in the things appertaining to life and godliness," and that the influence he exerted should be of a staid and enduring character. We might well blush if it were not so. Since his day, the question has been put to us, "Were Dr. Payson's christians, eminent christians in their day?" The writer of course is obliged to set himself aside from the question, when he would reply to such an interrogatory ; but as a general remark we affirm that they were a humble and spiritual people : we can make this statement at least so far as the first ten years of his ministry are concerned, and indeed after a much longer period.

Writes one correspondent, respecting Dr. Payson's great influence over his people, and especially over him ; "In the hour of conviction, when I strove to resist, the man of God held me fast. He had a power over my conscience, as one, whom from my earliest memory, I had been taught to reverence as an apostle of the Lord. I think we all felt such a reverence for the man as gave him an influence over the mind, we could hardly resist.



The fruits are seen in the seals of his ministry, and I have often passed a pleasant hour with some of those who were blessed under his ministry, in recalling the history of the converts gathered by his labors, and marking their steadfastness in the faith even to this day. The cases of relapse or departure from the faith are comparatively few. Is not this sufficient evidence that they were well instructed in the things of the kingdom?" E. F. C.

When we contemplate the character of those of his church who have departed this life, and survey the remnant which survive, we are impressed with the conviction that the influence which Dr. Payson exerted among his people was both *salutary* and *enduring*.

His people, after the decease of their pastor, like others, were exposed to the scorching heat and blighting mildew, and the winter's frost, yet they endured. We often meet those of the scattered remnant of his flock, in different directions, and we can bear testimony to their christian demeanor, and to their spiritual instructor's fidelity, alike honorable to both. His influence and instructions could not fail to be of a salutary tendency; he was thorough in his work, laying deep the foundation, as if he intended it should be enduring. He never "daubed with untempered mortar." The supports and consolations of religion his people enjoyed in their afflictions, and in death; and many we believe will he meet in heaven, who will bless him as the instrument of their conversion, whose salvation will tell of his faithfulness in characters enduring as eternity.

His own spirit was largely infused into the minds of his people. It was contagious. His constant and earnest desires for a revival, uttered in his prayers, produced in his church, in a measure, similar desires. His efforts to



obtain so desirable a blessing, had a tendency to invoke and to keep alive their zeal. His deadness to the world operated upon their minds as a salutary check to a worldly spirit. His prayers and preaching on the sabbath followed us from the sanctuary into our own dwellings, and into the week.\*

He had a praying, living church, generally "ready unto every good word and work." We well remember how much we found it adding to the blessedness of the sabbath to meet at the dwelling of some member of the church on a sabbath morning, an hour or so before the public service, to enjoy a season of devotion, and to pray for a blessing upon the word preached, and thus freshly anointed to repair to the sanctuary of God; an exercise which was attended with happy results at least to ourselves, by preparing our hearts to meet God.

There was a becoming zeal in his church in copying the pastor's example; in laying themselves out to bring sinners to the Savior. They aided him in such a work, and were on the look-out for such opportunities, well pleased to acquaint their pastor with new instances of awakening among his people. Although they might not compare with Harlan Page, in his indefatigable zeal for the salvation of his fellow-men, yet it was a similar spirit working in them, which actuated that faithful disciple when time after time he led some conscience-stricken sinner to his pastor's door. Many were induced by their faithful warnings and entreaties to forsake the wilderness of sin. They were led to the "shepherd's tent," and

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\*NOTE. Said a lady, a member of his church, to us recently, "Dr. Payson's preaching so deeply affected me, that on leaving the house of God I was afraid to speak to my husband as we walked home, lest I should lose any of the impressions which I had received from the sermon."

soon under the instructions of the pastor were found inquiring for the "footsteps of the flock," who were eventually by the Good "Shepherd of Israel" led to "green pastures and by the still waters."

Religion was, with his church, less a bye-business and possessed more of an engrossing and subduing character, than we have generally witnessed in our churches.

The younger members of his church, as is not so common now, were early put into the harness, and surrounded as they were by adverse influences, they maintained their christian character in a most exemplary manner. Religion was their element, and they manifested no desire to forsake her service. They professed to have found a greater good than the world could bestow, and in their hearts even, they "turned not back to Egypt."

Our pastor saw and lamented that much less zeal was manifest in his church than the glory of God and their fidelity to Him demanded. So did his church : still personal religion, and the interests of Zion, her advancement and glory both at home and abroad were usually the grand subjects of their thoughts and conversation. A degree of spiritual mindedness, more than is usual, was observed among them in ordinary meetings, by the way-side, and in family or social visits.

Most refreshing to our souls were the example and prayers, and especially the presence of our Pastor ; even as the spicy breezes that waft their odors to the sense . It was an influence so legitimate and so elevating in character, that his people ought to escape all reproach for their high appreciation of such a blessing, proving as it did, such an auxiliary in promoting and invigorating their spiritual life. We have recently had the pleasure of perusing a packet of letters containing the correspon-

dence of several young female members of his church. It might prove refreshing and instructive to young christians of the present day to read them and witness the spirituality of the converts of those times. You see in their letters, the heart laid open ; the drift and complexion of Dr. Payson's preaching, and thereby honoring their profession in an eminent example of piety. We allude to this circumstance to show the special character of the influence which Dr. Payson's preaching exerted over his people ; how subduing and enduring it was, entering into their plans, and governing their feelings, and moulding their hearts into the spirit of the Gospel. How it awakened and sustained a mutual sympathy amid the struggles and temptations which beset the pilgrim's path. The spirit of those letters is indicative of the great value they placed upon the "light of God's countenance," and how deeply they mourned over its absence. And when the remark is made (and it is made) that the religion of his day (especially as exhibited by him) was quite a different thing from much of that which goes for religion now, we are not disposed to dispute the truth of the remark. The following extract from a letter from a young lady abroad, is evincive of the continued interest in Dr. Payson and his pastoral instructions, which his people felt when absent.

NEWBURYPORT, February 18, 1819.

"Having long since paid little if any regard to the etiquette of the fashionable world, I shall not now begin to observe it by waiting, &c. No ; I must address her again with tender inquiries after her welfare. How is it with thee ? How is it with the friends dearest to my heart ? and how is it with all the beloved followers of our blessed Redeemer ?

“Though at present you are as sheep without a shepherd (she refers to a temporary absence of their pastor), yet I trust the unslumbering eye of Him who will never leave nor forsake his church, still watches over the people, which, heaven grant, may ever be his peculiar care. Your candlestick is, for a while, removed out of its place, but I hope, only to be returned with increased lustre, to remain for many years, a ‘burning and shining light.’ I was privileged to hear Mr. Payson preach three times, and enjoyed two highly interesting and never to be forgotten interviews. I almost felt, indeed I suffered myself to feel and imagine, while listening to the music of his voice, that I was worshipping in that celestial edifice, where my first vows were made, and again encircled by my heart’s first and best christian friends. Fancy too often roves among such scenes in Portland, and, alas ! too often collects around me a favorite group, with whom I once held sweet converse, and walked to the house of God in company. Are not such attachments solemn my dear —— ?

“Permit me to ask my dear —— what she is doing for poor perishing souls. How desirable to exhibit the lovely traits of our Divine Redeemer’s character, in such a manner as to allure the careless multitude to join the few who are willing to forsake all for Christ.” Speaking of her sense of unworthiness and short comings, and the danger of her proving a stumbling-block to others, she concludes : “rather would I perish myself—rather incur the vengeance of my Creator, than that through my walk and conversation, any soul should plunge into the bottomless abyss of misery. I hasten to close with humbly soliciting the remembrance of my far-distant friend in her petitions to the throne of grace ; perhaps I never more needed them ”

C. C



We hope to be excused for introducing so long an extract, but it tells of pure christian affection for her pastor, and for her christian friend — it speaks well of the intelligence and piety and deep spiritual experience of the young members of Dr. Payson's flock ; (and there were many of a similar spirit,) which becomes an endorsement to what we have asserted respecting the character of Dr. Payson's ministry.

When we speak of Dr. Payson and his church and the influence of his ministry, we are happy to record, and as we are bound also to do, that there were "burning and shining lights" in other churches in Portland and the surrounding region, which exerted an influence of the same type as Dr. Payson's. Spiritual "wisdom and knowledge had, in a good degree, become the stability of those times," and the "spirit was poured out from on high," on ministers and christians of different denominations.

In writing of the foregoing remarks, respecting the influence of Dr. Payson's preaching among his people, our pen, as all must be aware, could not but move warily and misgivingly along.

The interrogatory standing at the head of this division of the chapter, we have endeavored to answer satisfactorily ; although we have found it a delicate task. And we have intended to do it in accordance with strict truthfulness. "Nought has been extenuated, and nought set down" in an overweening spirit. We would say good things of Dr. P.'s church, although we are very far from claiming perfection for them. Many of them we trust are in heaven, out of the reach of our remarks. Yet if it were not so ; if they were here and could listen, we are sure that it would be an innocent blush that would beautify their immortal features, to hear how the grace



of God had made them all they were on earth — the same grace has exalted them to a seat among the angels. And as to the few pilgrims who yet survive, a blush of intermingled shame and joy is seen as a comely suffusion upon their countenances, that tells of distinguished mercy and goodness on God's part, and of obligation and unworthiness on theirs ; and which can have the effect only to give them a lighter step on their way to heaven.

We have said that it was Dr. Payson's wish to keep his church in the harness : it was also his object, in his preaching and in all his instructions, to keep them humble. He would have them cherish a low opinion of themselves, and not to rest satisfied with the measure of their present attainments, but to be " reaching forth " after an object which would seem to recede as they approached to grasp it. Having instituted in his own case, a high standard of judgment respecting his duty, he would have his people " walk by the same rule." The spirit of the Laodicean church, proud of its imaginary wealth in spiritual goods, he regarded as most dangerous to the prosperity of christians, and he did his utmost to break their hold of such a delusion.

A holy atmosphere pervaded that community, as long as Dr. Payson lived ; yet religion in his day, in the place where he labored had its ebb and flow. A declension of religious zeal, was more observable among *his* people, than in some others, because of the elevated mark on which they had been taught to fix their eye.

The danger and consequences of spiritual pride in christians, especially young christians, of " thinking more highly of themselves than they ought to think," were clearly pointed out by Dr. Payson, and his instructions touching this subject commonly had the desired ef-

fect. He would set the standard of holy obedience so high that with all their efforts they found themselves delinquent. This served to humble them, and left them less exposed to the temptation to indulge a self-righteous spirit, and to feel more sensibly their need of the Redeemer's righteousness. Then they could not glory "save in their infirmities," while they learned where was their strength to obey, as well as the necessity of the blood that was to wash away their sins, which they found accompanying every service, of every day of their earthly pilgrimage.

"God's plan," says Mr. Newton, "is to make us feel poor." When we first enter the Divine life we propose to grow rich, and not to have to come as beggars every day. Dr. Payson practised with his people very much in agreement with this principle. We do not say how far the remark holds true, that there is more pleasure in the anticipation of an expected good than in the possession of it; but it may be best that we be kept in that expecting posture of mind, with the Apostle, when he said "Not as though we had already attained or were already perfect," but "reaching after" &c. The anticipation *here*, the consummation *hereafter*; here the strife, there the victory; here the cross, there the crown.

The truly humble christian never feels that he is rich in spiritual goods, or that he has made any uncommon attainments in religion. Others may notice the advancement in his piety, but he himself will not be likely to perceive it. Mr. Newton, in his description of progress in the spiritual life, compares christians to the first three letters of the alphabet; the last one indicated those to whom belonged the most perfect christian character.

Some person who had read the description, thought

he recognised himself in the character of C. and wrote to Mr. Newton to that effect. In reply Mr. N. informed his correspondent, who had arrogated this high distinction that there was one feature in the character of C., which he had forgot to mention, which was, that C. "*never knew his own face.*"

It was not the legitimate tendency of Dr. Payson's treatment of his people to make them *gloomy*, as may have been asserted. His close and searching ministry, would naturally lead his church to a severe scrutiny of the character of their motives and hopes ; and his own high aim, begetting in them a desire to copy his example, would lead to greater efforts after a spiritual mindedness in some measure like his whom they delighted to imitate. Like the Savior himself, he described the way to heaven as narrow ; to be entered upon and pursued with self-denial, and a sacrifice of everything which would come in the way of attaining the grand object ; and it would not be strange, if misgivings on their part, lest they had failed to do this, should occasion a distrust with regard to the genuineness of their christian character which might be seen depicted in the countenances of some "Fearings," and "Ready-to-halts," which would be mistaken for gloom ; but which was in fact only an expression of the deep solicitude of the heart to know its acceptance with God. We say, that it was somewhat difficult at times, under his faithful preaching, to hold on to our hope.

A young female member of Dr. Payson's church, who was naturally inclined to doubt her acceptance with God, happening in B., where the celebrated Dr. G. was then preaching, fell in company with him. Learning that she was one of Dr. Payson's church, he asked her

the question "if Dr. Payson's church members were not gloomy?" remarking that those he had seen, appeared so. The persons he had seen were, we believe, somewhat of a melancholic temperament, and this circumstance may have given rise to his remarks. Yet, as a general thing, Dr. G.'s impressions on the subject were not true. One fact about it, however, is that if any of us had supposed that we had laid up anything during the week, and were become "increased in goods," and we began to think that we were something, he would be sure on the next sabbath to strip us, and lead us to exclaim with Job, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither."

From a critical observation of the deceitfulness of the heart, in all its phases, he became an adept in the art of unmasking the religious character of professors. He would distinguish at a glance the false from the genuine in religious profession, and whether the mistake in an individual, arose from self-deception or sheer hypocrisy.

It might be a source of mortification to us to be thus handled, yet only good grew out of it. We found we did not know half so much as in our ignorance, we had supposed, nor that we possessed half as much genuine religion as we imagined. We were thereby reduced to our proper stature. A *repressing* process with his church, Dr. Payson had instituted from the beginning, and he carried it out to the last. This management with them, he adopted as a principle of duty on his part, and for their benefit. He would not incur the charge of manufacturing hypocrites. Yet no man was more tender towards the weak and feeble-minded of his flock, or more ready to "bind up the broken reed." But when he saw the gangrene, he would faithfully apply the knife or the caustic.



Between Dr. Payson and all evangelical churches there was mutual christian fellowship. He loved all who were built upon the sure foundation. They shared his visits and his sympathies, and especially such as were noted for their piety. The people of God, of whatever name, could not but love and respect him ; and his eminently holy and consistent walk secured the respect even of those who were of opposite sentiments in religion, or who were of no religion. All who could relish the “ sincere milk of the word ” were fed while listening to his preaching and prayers.

He was steadfast in his own persuasion, yet charitable towards other christians, although they might differ in the non-essentials of religion.

Our good Baptist brethren were in the habit of attending his occasional meetings, and at their meetings, Dr. Payson and his people were sometimes found. Like all good Christians he did not refuse to partake of wholesome food, by whomsoever it might be served. He had no prejudice of that sort : he could relish the “ Bread of Life ” come from whatever hands it might, according to the principle exemplified in Mr. Bunyan’s practice at a certain time, when a *pie* was sent to him by a church-of-England-man, the bearer being ordered to say to Mr. Bunyan “ that it was a *Christmas-pie* ; ” which the donor might suppose would prove as a test for Bunyan’s principles and appetite to see which would gain the victory.—Bunyan said to the bearer, “ Tell your master that John Bunyan knows how to distinguish between *Christmas* and *pie* .

Yet Dr. Payson would contend for the faith, and for his own peculiar views, when honorably called out in their defence.

He was firmly established in the doctrine of Infant baptism. Yet said he once in conversation with a member of his church who had been some time vacillating in his mind upon that subject, "I too was once as much troubled as you are, on that point. It seemed, said he, as if something from an unknown source, would iterate and re-iterate, "You must be a *Baptist*, you *must* be a Baptist;" a suggestion that seemed almost irresistible. However both the Pastor and the pupil, found something more than *suggestions*, to establish them in the doctrine upon which they had once been unsettled.

He happened on some occasion, to meet at the house of a mutual friend, a lady of the Baptist denomination, Mrs. B., "a mother in their Israel," a leader of high standing. Soon, the subject that forms the grand line of division between the two denominations, was introduced. Both, "nothing loth" drew up in battle array, most courteously to be sure, as we should expect from the very respectable character of the combatants; yet with all their firmness and dexterity, they plied their weapons of argument and defence. How much either gained by the fight, or whether both waxed stronger in their opinion, by the encounter, or whether both "came off second best," it were useless to conjecture.

Mr. Payson in the course of the debate, remarked that he believed he had been as truly taught the doctrine of "infant baptism" by the Holy Spirit, as he had been the doctrine of "depravity."

Mrs. B.'s exalted opinion of Mr. Payson's piety, and experimental knowledge of Bible truth, compelled her to pay a suitable deference to his opinion by saying, that she now believed a person might be *conscientious* in adopting views on christian baptism, different from her own. *Before,*

she had not believed it, but had supposed that persons did not fall in with the Baptist scheme from pride, or an unwillingness to take up the cross.

It is not to be supposed, that our fair antagonist, "lowered a single jot, for on this point our good Baptist brethren "nail their colors to the mast," yet her respectful acknowledgement of Mr. Payson's sincerity in his belief, and that conviction derived too from such a source, was *something*; a signal of cessation of hostilities at least, between two, who were disposed to appeal to the same standard, and which should be considered as an "end of all strife."

One grand point was gained by the contest—Mrs. B.'s acknowledgement—although she still thought, probably, that Mr. Payson might be "conscientiously" mistaken, and herself "conscientiously" right.

He was usually found in his own pulpit on the sabbath, although when he exchanged it was with those ministers who composed the Cumberland Association, and who had *subscribed its articles*. We are not aware that he deviated from this course. The reasons for his desire to preach so exclusively to his own people, we are unable precisely to state.

One reason may have been that his long cherished habits of private sabbath devotion, might thereby be interrupted; a matter of great weight with him. Another reason may have been that a course of preaching as uninterrupted as possible, would be more advantageous to the spiritual interests of his people.

When we saw a stranger in his pulpit it awakened no emotions of regret or disappointment. His people were always satisfied, and more than satisfied with their own minister: yet there were very able and sound preachers,

in the neighborhood, with whom he exchanged, to whom we gave a cheerful welcome, for the sake of variety, if nothing else. And we were desirous that in other places, people might have opportunity to hear and judge of him for themselves. We were willing to part with him for a season, that others might be benefited by his labors.

Several missions, longer or shorter, he performed for this special object. His sympathies were not exclusive. An ocean of them was in his heart, an ocean *wide* as it was *deep*. Hence his joy at hearing of the conversion of sinners, and his willingness to go, where he might be an instrument of saving souls. This practice is spoken of in his Memoir ; the effect of his memorable missions, are related by those among whom he went, to this day with deep interest.

On a Sabbath in the year 1810, Rev. Mr. Miltimore of New Casco (now Falmouth) had preached in Mr. Payson's pulpit, probably in exchange with the Senior Pastor ; Mr. Payson was with him in the pulpit. The Falmouth minister was a man ardent in temperament, and commonly waxed warmer and warmer during his discourse. He was then speaking from the text in Jeremiah, " Upon this I awoke, and behold my sleep was sweet unto me" &c. His subject and thoughts led him in the course of his remarks, to express a great desire for a revival among his own people, such as he had just been describing ; the happy effects of the special influences of the Spirit. Mr. Payson concluded the services, by an earnest and fervent prayer, that his brother might *more* than realize his wishes, and that all present might pray that such a work might commence among that people, for whom their pastor had expressed so much solicitude.



## CHAPTER XIV.

The faculty of attention and observation remarkably developed in Dr. Payson—His strong intuitive sagacity—Remarks on the great advantages to a minister of possessing a habit of observation, and a knowledge of common things—The opinions of several eminent men relative to this subject—Illustrated by the examples of Rev. Mr. Bunyan, Newton and Scott—The Minister always in his study.

Dr. Payson, although he possessed a thoroughly disciplined mind, was also largely endowed by nature with strong and intuitive sense.

He had read lessons of wisdom, with an acute and observing eye, in the various objects of nature. His ear was always open : every faculty was awake, intent on surveying events passing or past. He was contemplative, but not absent-minded. Objects of great magnitude and deep interest absorbed his attention, especially on account of their moral bearing, and the aid he might bring from them to elucidate truth. Deeply observant, of the works of God, and the history of man, he must have been, or he had not possessed that richly-jeweled mind, furnished and decorated as it was from the gathered spoils of his walks of usefulness or relaxation, or from the flights of his excursive imaginations. He surveys the universe of suns and systems to bring down light and flame to irradiate and inspire his own soul, and to impart their brilliancy and

their heat to others. He walks among the tombs, and hears death's silent and impressive teachings. He walks upon the shore of the far-stretching ocean, and looks with admiration upon the world of waters, or watches the receding wave, and the smooth surface it has left behind. He hears the voice of God, as he fixes his ear to the "sea-shell's ocean-sound ;" \* and profitably moralises upon all these emblematic voices.

The union of the imaginative faculty, with judgment and taste of which we have before spoken, was manifested at a very early period of his life. From what we can learn from others, and with our own personal knowledge of him, it is evident that he possessed an early maturity of mind, with none of those fearful attendants usual to precocity of genius, which so often and so sadly leave the mildew and the blight upon the fragrant blossom of youthful promise.

Dr. Payson's mind was of a vigorous, yet steady and manly growth. It grew fast, yet not at the expense of strength. There was no unhealthy development or disproportionate outline or feature ; but well-balanced, presenting a beautiful symmetry, which bore rule over the diversified complexity of his character. Compare him to the ship ; it is well-ballasted and manned ; himself the prudent and skilful navigator. We feared for him no ocean breeze in its violence ; though he should spread every sail to the wind ; all was safe.

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NOTE. \* The poet Lander gives an inimitable description of a river nymph saying to a shepherd,

"I have sinuous shells of pearly hue ;  
" Shake one and it awakens ; then apply  
" Its polished lips to your attentive ear,  
" And it *remembers its august abodes,*  
" *And murmurs, as the Ocean murmurs there.*"

The possession of this faculty of discernment or discrimination by Dr. Payson, is somewhat difficult to account for, when it is considered that he was born and reared in comparative seclusion, amid rural scenes; cloistered in the village library, and a mere book-worm from his childhood. We may suppose that the world was seen and read by him, principally through the medium of books. We say it is difficult to account for the fact that he was able so successfully afterwards, to sound the depths, and strike upon the springs within the human heart, and in such graphic pencillings to sketch to the life its windings and its intricacies in all their vast variety, with so masterly a hand, unless we are to ascribe this adroitness of delineation, to the accuracy and diligence with which he had watched and scanned his own heart and life.

With the same facility that he studied, and understood the printed page, he conned the wondrous volume of mankind. Upon the watch for the occasion, he would successfully explore the sources and phases of human passion, and do it with a single flash of his eye.

When the Apostles would select those who should aid them in the work of spreading the Gospel, they directed that seven men be looked out, "who were" not only "of good report, and full of the Holy Ghost, but of wisdom" also: the last named quality not less important than the first. If "wisdom is knowledge practically applied to the best ends", if it is "sagacity, prudence, and judicious conduct," we see herein the wisdom of the Apostles. The same idea is contained in Paul's directions respecting the appointment of bishops, when he says, "that he be not a *novice*." We should be reasonable in our ex-

pectations concerning this matter. For instance, we are not to suppose that a young man born and reared far from the sea-board, must understand about the rigging or the working of a ship, or possess practical knowledge of navigation, yet if one is to be selected to address a congregation principally composed of seamen, he should at least have been conversant with that class of men, and so well acquainted with their manners and customs, and the general principles of a sea-faring life, as to be able favorably to impress a sailor's mind by the appropriateness of the illustrations he employs, and thus make it evident that he understands his subject himself, and their character. If he does not possess such a knowledge or tact, he will be to them worse than a "barbarian," and by his blunders will only defeat his intentions, however good they may be.

Not, that when the sons of the ocean are addressed on the subject of religion, we are to make our discourses to abound with sea phrases, in order, as we may suppose, the better to please them, or to fix their attention, or to place the truth upon their minds. We learn the error of such a course from the remarks of seamen themselves. They are disgusted when addressed in this way. In his proper sphere, on shipboard, let the sailor be sailor ; he will be ; but when we would teach him the way of life, let him hear the gospel in the same language as we speak to other men ; otherwise they will deem it an insinuation, that they are ignorant of the use of common language. A course so objectionable as the former, may be avoided by the judicious manner of the preacher, and yet in his general appeals to his audience, he may preserve the peculiar spirit of his mission, and by incidental



allusions to that course of life, may explain, illustrate and apply the truth with very happy effect.

There are instances abounding among ministers, of a lack of knowledge of common things, appertaining to secular life, or what some would not inappropriately call want of common sense, which must almost entirely defeat a minister's usefulness, however learned in the schools, or polite or agreeable he may be in the circles in which he moves, or however eloquent in the pulpit.

Again, it is equally obvious that in cities and large towns, (in ordinary cases) a person totally unacquainted with the manners and observances of polite circles, must, while remaining ignorant of those usages, be far less acceptable or useful on that account, although with a good education and good common sense, he will in this respect soon qualify himself to move in such a sphere with propriety. Cowper deprecates the practice of

“ Laying hands on skulls that cannot teach and will not learn.”

The minister must learn not only to suit the action to the word in his preaching, but he must suit his language and behavior to the circumstances of his condition, and to the habits and expectations of his people, in his ministerial intercourse with them. He must become not only “ all things to all men,” but he must know how to be so, with the least possible offence.

In most cases, doubtless, the defect we speak of, is to be attributed to the want of attention and observation. One traveler treasures up a volume of incidents and general knowledge respecting the country he visits, while another returns with his head upon his shoulders, it is true, but with it as empty as when he commenced his travels,

One has had his eyes and ears open and a recording pen in his hand, the other has seen nothing, heard nothing.— In the several professions, men have arisen to eminence or remained stationary, or sunk far below mediocrity, as they have cultivated a habit of observation, or failed to do it.

We do not advert to Dr. Payson, as the only example among ministers of an uncommon maturity of judgment, or development of the observing faculty. Yet he possessed this faculty in a high degree, and so have others, whose proficiency and success in their ministerial course, has been signally marked from its commencement to its close. The value of such a habit is not easily over-estimated.

A young man leaves the secluded and quiet society of the country, leaves his plough and his hoe, his flocks and herds, for his books, and spends eight or ten years it may be, in pursuit of those literary and theological acquirements which the work of the ministry demands. That the knowledge he has thus obtained is valuable, admits of no doubt. But might he not become vastly more useful and more successful as a minister, more healthy in body, and practically wiser, if he were to spend some of that time in reading *men* more, and *books* less ? or at least if he were to devote a suitable portion of time before settling over a parish, to some pursuit of a kindred character, where he might obtain a knowledge of mankind, that would the better fit him for his anticipated employment ? It would not be considered as lost time.— He would be acquiring a very essential part of a ministerial education.

Why is it that so many young ministers *break down* before the harness is well fitted to their backs ? There must

be a fault somewhere. Have they not overtasked their minds at first in order to secure popularity at the expense of health, bringing with them into the ministry constitutions impaired by neglect, a nervous system deranged, and minds overtasked almost to the point of utter ruin. Such a course is suicidal. It were better to have stepped upon a lower round of the ladder at first, or to have struck an hour at the beginning somewhat less than *twelve* ; if ambition merely prompted him in his aspirations, it was surely an ignoble one ; if a desire to be eminently and permanently useful in his calling, he has mistaken the means ; his design has failed of its accomplishment. In most cases, popularity built on such a basis will soon be on the wane. He must be a man of much general knowledge, and especially a knowledge of the Bible, and of reflection ; of powers inured to study in his youth, and possessing an attentive and observing mind such as we have spoken of, in order to be able to fill his discourses with original and well elaborated thoughts. These will be his sources of intellectual wealth whereby he shall be able to feed his people. Such characters as we are now considering are found here and there among men. Dr. Payson was a rare example.

Dr. Johnson remarks, that “ to illustrate one thing by its resemblance to another, has been always the most popular and efficacious art of instruction.” Dr. Payson had a remarkable skill in this art, as we have before hinted. “ A minister,” says one, “ should always be in his study ;” not literally so ; nor so intent on his musings as to discover an awkward absent-mindedness, sometimes seen ; but the writer obviously means that a minister should be always and everywhere the discerning, diligent, accumulating student.

It has been said that Dr. Payson availed himself of such an auxiliary in his preaching, and thereby greatly enriched and enlarged his stores of illustration. Notwithstanding what may have been said by some to depreciate this peculiar trait in his preaching, whether from conviction, or for other reasons, we think there can be no question as to the vast utility of the exercise of this noble quality. Were this *excursive* habit to be cultivated more assiduously by ministers, as it was by Dr. Payson, they would be better able to endure the expenditure which they are constantly called upon to make. And let reading, and reflection, and imagination — each in its turn, and combined, bring in their quota of material, not to be transcribed into their sermons as with the hand of plagiarism, but to so be in-wrought by the process of an easy and natural digestion, that they shall incorporate with the system,—forming the blood, muscle and nerve,—which diffuse coloring, or impart strength and elasticity to the whole discourse.

Let the minister cultivate this observing habit by imitating the ship-builder in pursuit of timber for his ship. He is in the forest. See him select this stick for the keel, and that for a *rib*, and that for a *knee*, and so on—he goes through the forest for some purpose. Another of a different stamp, idly and unobservantly wends his heedless way, prompted neither by curiosity nor design. He has stooped to gather—not a leaf of the valley, nor a flower of the mountain. He can scarcely tell you whether the forest is in its summer foliage, or autumn robes. His heedless and random footstep has merely crushed the bramble, while the woodland scenery has been to him a blank.

Happy for the future *minister*, if in the *child* is seen the springing up of this hopeful quality. And the father



may see it, (and he should encourage it,) as in his morning ride, when his little son at his side remarks upon the goldfinch that has flown affrighted at your approach; or the eagle in her lofty track over your head, or the antic leap of the hare as it makes for its forest fastness. Much of usefulness and promise may be seen in these early developments; and they will mark the *man* as they mark the *child*.

Men distinguished in all the professions, owe their success very much to the cultivation of the faculty of observation. We could easily mention names. Let there be a training of this faculty, if it exist at all in the young mind. Without its development and improvement in some good degree, the future lawyer loses his case; the physician his patient and his practice; and too often the minister much of his labor. His sermons, however methodical and squared by rule and compass, will be lean and dry; and his intercourse among his people will be likely to be unprofitable and unappreciated. These men have got their lessons from their books, they are well-read, but this special tact of which we speak, they cannot learn from books.

I knew a man, a ship-master, who, without education, without a knowledge of the theory of navigation, had crossed and recrossed the Atlantic very many times, always successfully, by mere dint of a practical sound judgment, and a wakeful and careful observation. Another I knew, who had carefully studied the principles of navigation, yet had he been put on board of a ship, would have discovered his incompetency to mark the ship's progress, or shape her course for a single twenty-four hours. The latter case was an instance of one who had obtained his knowledge in the chimney.

corner. We *must have tools*, we must also understand how to use them adroitly. To "take an observation," and to "heave the log," you must *go to sea* for it. So, one who has the science and tact of *angling*, and understands all about the brook and the fish, will catch enough for dinner in half an hour. By his side, or near by, stands another who baits his hook, and throws his line in vain. The fish he frightens by his shadow, or he jerks his line prematurely or too suddenly.

The foregoing remarks, although somewhat of a digressive character, we trust will not be viewed as a departure from the original design of this work, or if to illustrate still further this invaluable habit under consideration, we adduce two or three remarkable examples as testimony in its favor. We shall refer to the Rev. Messrs. Thomas Scott, John Bunyan and John Newton. We have not selected these men because they were "uneducated" in the common, though we think, false acceptance of the term.

These men were all possessed of strong native intellectual powers as their works abundantly testify. They were educated in very different schools, were trained thoroughly in the ways of sin and satan, yet in their blindness, they were led in a "way they knew not."—What education or the learning of the schools had not done for them, must be supplied from some other source, and in some other way. God fitted them for their work. He was their instructor, and "none teacheth like him." He "opened their ear to receive instructions" from the great volume of the world; the men and things of the world, and of Providence. This faculty of deep observation in them was doubtless natural. Yet its development and cultivation, was the fruit of their own effort and peculiar circumstances. What they did, others

may do. Of the first-mentioned, we have only to open his "Commentary," his "Force of Truth," and his Works generally, to witness the sage reflections, the discriminating power, and acute observation, of a prolific and comprehensive mind. A mere knowledge of books would have been entirely inadequate to have furnished him with materials for his "Practical Observations." A close attention to the workings of his own heart, and deductions from his own life and experience, applied with great judgment in elucidation of the sacred text, have given his Commentary its world-wide celebrity. And he was improving upon these natural advantages all his days. Might it not be seen to what he was advancing in after life; what such a youth would be, who, after walking twenty miles of a forenoon, could then catch and shear *eleven sheep of his father's flock* in the afternoon. His mind, also, gathered strength and amplitude from the early formed habit of noticing whatever passed around and within him. Might we not expect that in his strong muscled mind, there was lodged sufficient power to grapple, as he did, with the offspring of that goat of a *Paine*; bind it hand and foot, and ham-string and — yea, skin it, and throw out the carcase, which the carrion-infidels yet feed upon to this day.\*

And who was John Newton? Well known, the christian world over, as the shrewd, sagacious, popular minister, and once the despised and degraded African blasphemer. With but a scanty knowledge derived from books, he was yet a profound student of the works of God, a close observer of the workings of his own heart, and everywhere a learner; always in his study, long before he became a minister.

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\*Allusion is here made to "Scott's Answer to Paine's Age of Reason."

He had not paced the quarter-deck of his ship, on a star-light evening without gathering a lesson from the bespangled firmament, the unforgotten alphabet of which he had been taught by his godly mother, on many just such an evening. Stowed away in the fore-castle beneath the waters, his observing eye was fathoming the mysterious depths of the depraved hearts of his companions; his own conscience witnessing at the same time, to a more wretched counterpart of ungodliness in his own. Was he not here, in this school of awful depravity, receiving lessons for future use, when he should stand in the pulpit at Olney and St. Mary-Woolnoth, London; to tell man of his ruin and his remedy, and to gather listening multitudes by his popularity, within the walls of a church in the great metropolis of the world?

No, he had not mingled with the different races and conditions of men in all possible positions and circumstances, and received no instruction from such a volume of living men and manners. Given up to his own reflections in the midst of his misery and guilt, and lacerated by the accusing spirit within; compelled "while on the coast of Africa, a servant of servants, to wash his only shirt upon the rocks, and to put it upon his back to pry"—the finger of God's Providence was inscribing in enduring letters upon his mind a humiliating yet profitable lesson. From these lowest depths of hell, the leaves of which he wrote there, he turned over and over again, when in that *London "study,"* he would enrich his Cardiphonia and his Omicron, and his discourses for the Sabbath, with illustrations, to utter to a people that hung upon his lips; truths that told upon the conscience of a Buchanan, a Scott or a Wilberforce, and through them to the edification of the christian world. Three or four large octavo volumes of letters and sermons, and other



works, full of wisdom, witness to the importance of a well-cultivated and observing mind.

And who, what child, even, has not seen the picture of what Cowper calls the "Ingenious Dreamer," and his pilgrim with the burden on his back, looking up to the cross. Bunyan had talked heart to heart. He had explored the folios of fancy ; he had sounded the depths of sin. His wisdom was dearly bought. Books, he had scarcely read any, yet to no one does the remark better apply than to Bunyan, "beware of the man of *one book*." He obtained his knowledge somewhere. Where? Unobserved and almost unconsciously, from the thousand incidents of every day, he was gathering up thoughts of usefulness in his deeply reflective mind.

These thoughts came in from the high-ways and the hedges, and from every quarter ; and they were of every size, color and shape. From the regiment of the King's soldiery which he viewed, and from accounts of battles fought, his memory was furnished with materials for his "Holy War." The tinker's mental eye was far away, searching into deep subjects, while his natural eye was prying into his customer's tea-kettle to discover its leak ; and choice thoughts were being hammered out in that prolific brain of his, that were to outsound the strokes of his brawny arm, which fell upon the sounding brass. His twelve years in Bedford jail were equal to three college courses. He prayed in the dungeon, and read his precious Bible there, and then came forth to the more open light of day ; while his eye peered through his grated window upon the countenances of those who, from curiosity, or any other motive, visited him ; not by any

means unobservant of those faces, nor with an ear unattentive to the remarks of the passer by.

In that gloomy receptacle, however, he was furnishing himself with weapons for future warfare. His own "Diabolus" and "Apollyon" shall feel the sturdy blows from those weapons, and "Mansoul" shall be free, for so has the great king, "Shaddai," decreed; who afterwards "sent and signified it by his servant *John*." And no one could have written "Grace Abounding," who had not been conversant in the school of Satan and of the Holy Ghost.

If not from books, then, from whence the wisdom and ingenuity contained in the volumes he has written; read now by all, and wondered at by all, and pronounced by all, from the classic scholar to the most illiterate in the community, worthy to be "placed upon the shelf," as among the most highly approved and finished authors.

His education was, if possible, worse than none; at one time a mere strolling vagabond, a walking nuisance of the streets, and yet a *learner*, an acute observer, all this while. He had picked up the golden ideas somehow and somewhere; and stuffed them away in the crannies of his brain, as the penurious miser stows away his treasures into some secret apartment, which are all discovered after he is dead and buried, and he is found to be a rich man in all his external beggary. Every particle of his knowledge, John Bunyan worked up; he re-cast, he hammered, he polished, he spread it out, and it is now enriching the minds of millions. Thus, without learning, without books, without ordinary instructions, the great living world, in its ten thousand phases, was constantly teaching him.

Let the reader pardon this excursion, and when he considers that we left the presence of Dr. Payson, to return, after making our obeisance to those excellent men, whom the Dr. himself loved to visit, whom he highly respected, esteeming it a privilege to draw from them some rare gem wherewith to adorn his own discourses.

## CHAPTER XV.

### VISIT TO RINDGE, N. H.

A knowledge of some of Dr. Payson's youthful characteristics, we have obtained during a recent visit to his native village. Some of these were related to us while there by several of the companions of his childhood; and others have since been communicated by letter. The visit, our impressions, and the information we obtained respecting him and the family connections, may not be considered out of place, if introduced here.

We had for some time been desirous of visiting the place of Payson's birth and the scenery of his childhood. The village of Rindge, New Hampshire, is pleasantly situated, about sixty miles N. W. from Boston, and is a border town on the Massachusetts line, adjoining New Ipswich, where is a respectable Academy, at which Edward Payson prepared for College. His father the Rev. Seth Payson, D. D., was the settled pastor over the Congregational church in Rindge, for nearly forty years. He died in 1820, aged 62. The church edifice of a very fine model and respectable appearance is still standing. It is the house of God where the son first publicly devoted himself to the Savior; and in which his voice was often afterwards heard as a herald of that Savior, to the admiration of his father's flock, many of whom were the companions of his youth. His first appearance in



his father's pulpit would excite of course considerable curiosity among the villagers while listening to the youthful preacher who had been reared among them, but who had been absent for several years. Their expectations respecting his pulpit talents were more than realized. They had known his great diffidence when he left for College ; and although he was distinguished as a leader among the boys in their youthful pastimes, and public school exhibitions, in which he discovered no special excellence of oratory, yet when they came to see his christian boldness in the pulpit ; to hear his deep-toned manly voice, and the solemn utterance of the most weighty truths, the fine style of his compositions, remarks one "I was surprised, and I have viewed him since as rather the greatest preacher I know of. We thought much of his visits and his preaching after that." He was a prophet with honor in his own country. That germ of intellect was unfolding, that heart of piety had begun to weep over the guilt and miseries of lost men, and he enters upon his Great Master's work with a zeal that should never know extinguishing or abatement—a zeal enkindled not by vain ambition, but warming with more and more fervency as years rolled away.

"Edward Payson," writes one, "when a lad, was quite fond of active amusements gould, bat ball, racing, &c. He was a very swift runner, seldom outdone or overtaken by any one ; he was a leader in most of the *innocent* sports common among his playfellows, and when "Sides were chosen" either for spelling in school, or for sports upon the common, the "Captain" having the right of choosing first, it was usually considered the victory to be his own before the contest began. He was acquainted with all the rules of play, and when disputes arose as

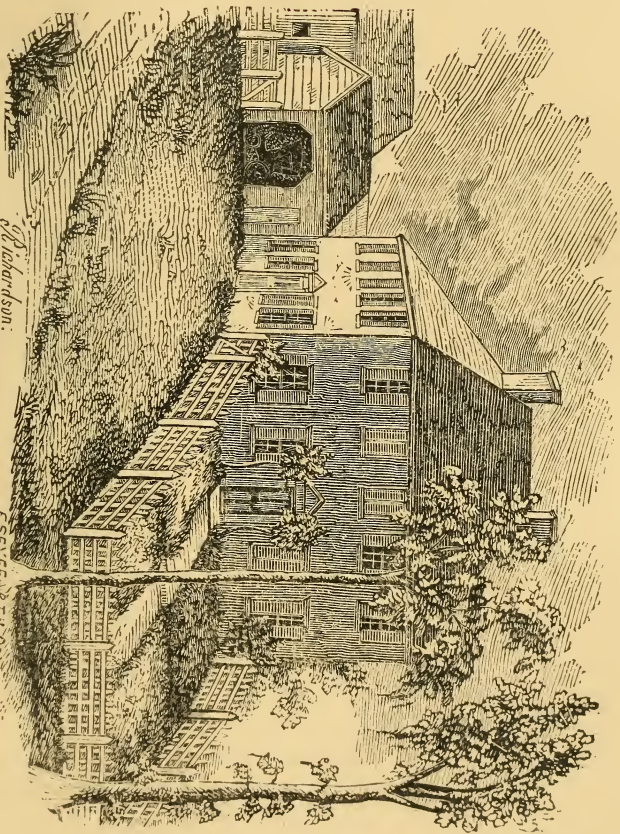
was often the case, the matter was soon settled by an appeal to Payson, no one doubting his knowledge or integrity.

One of his more frequent playmates, related to me an incident of a winter evening. She said her boys, Payson among the number, were sliding upon the hard snow down a steep hill, when Payson, always first in the sport, near the foot of the hill was upset, the sled coming in contact with a wall, and he was thrown with violence into a deep ravine, uttering at the same time a fearful groan. His fellow-sliders soon gathered around him, he was motionless, and, as they supposed, breathless; all were greatly alarmed; one and another exclaimed, "What can be done? what can we do? how shall we get him home?" when suddenly, to their great joy and surprise, up sprung their supposed dead companion, and seizing his sled, shouted "Come boys, now for another slide," and with the speed of a Fox ran up the hill.

In the winter of 1801, Edward Payson, acted some prominent parts in a "School Exhibition" and his Part in the Comedy which was the prominent feature of the Exhibition, was that of a profligate and a dissembler, and he seemed to enter into the true spirit of the play with great life and energy.

A person in the service of his Father when Edward was a student in Cambridge, relates, that on a home visit he arrived at midnight having walked 30 or 35 miles. On the morning after his return, a conversation between Mrs. Payson and Edward, was partly overheard, which he supposed, related to religious belief, Mrs. Payson saying, "your Father will pick you all to pieces."

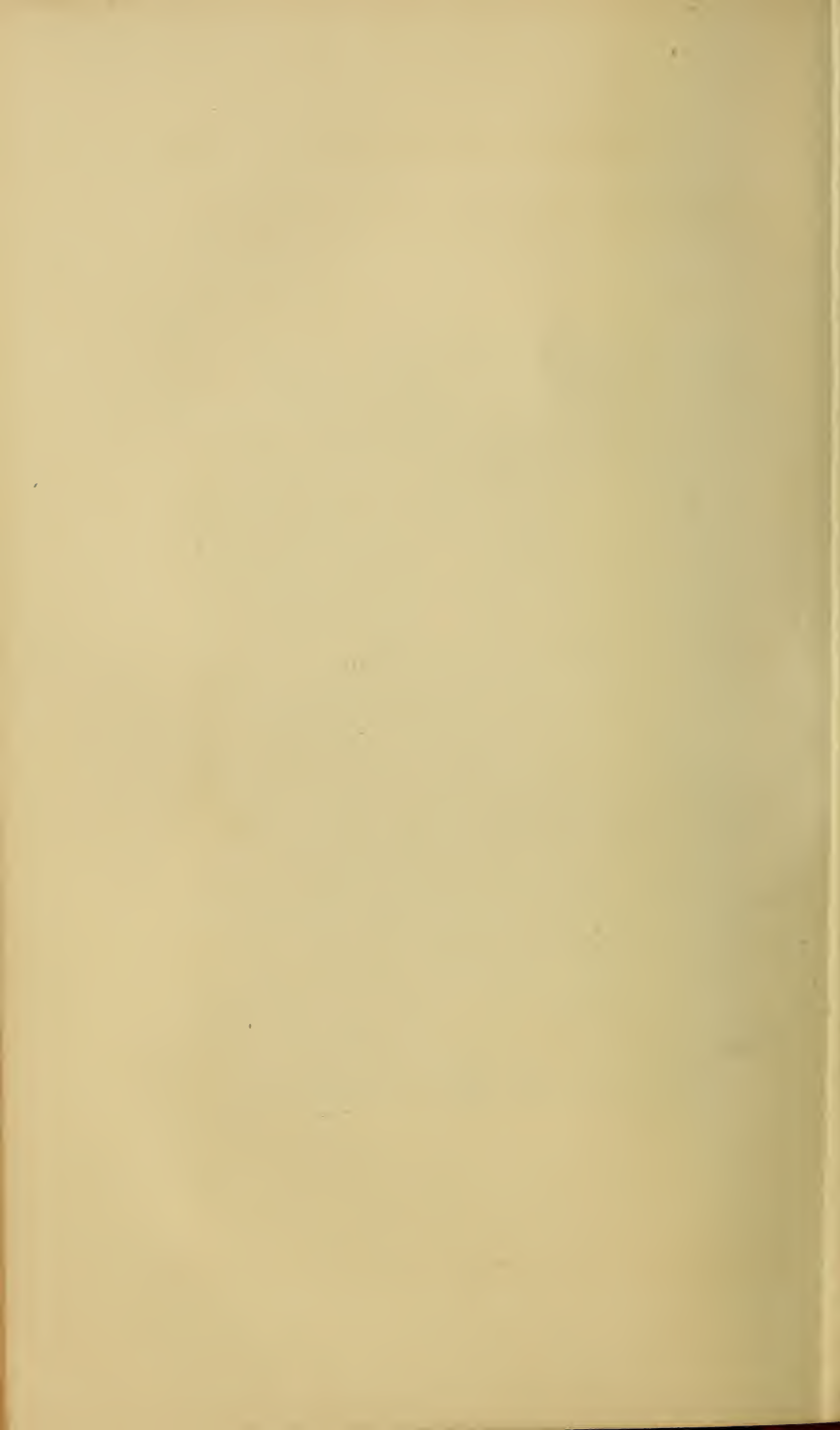
That part of the incident just related, respecting the conversation between Edward and his mother (which



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THE PAYSON MANSION, RINDGE, N. H.





was doubtless of a religious character) shows that his religious views had undergone some change during his absence.

His good mother, it would seem, although well qualified for the task, did not choose to enter into the argument with her son, but to refer him to his father, who she well knew was able "to pick him all to pieces."

She probably breasted this first and unexpected onset, with outspoken courage; still her heart, with sad misgivings was ready to sink within her; while she thought upon the fearful consequences of his renouncing the religious belief in which he had been trained; that all her pleasing anticipations she had so fondly cherished respecting the usefulness of her first-born, were now in imminent jeopardy; until by one strong, up-heaving prayer of the *mother's* heart, she brought down into her bosom the consolation of that divine promise contained in the everlasting covenant, "I will be a God to thee and to *thy seed* after thee." A voice seemed to say "Peace, thou daughter of Abraham; thy son shall live," for he is to be a "witness for me and a chosen vessel to bear my name."

It may be remarked in this connection, that the parents of Edward were both persons of eminent piety and talents, and very highly esteemed as such in that region. Dr. Payson had long sustained his reputation as a godly and able pastor among his flock in Rindge. His memory is precious among his people to this day. When the subject was being discussed as to the manner of disposing of his late dwelling house, his people with great unanimity and respect, voted to retain and repair it; and it now bears the honorable appellation of the "Payson Mansion." The building is a fine, ample structure, beautifully loca-

ted upon a rising ground that overlooks the village, and is now occupied by the Rev. A. W. Burnham, his very worthy successor in the ministry.

So brief a visit admitted only of a hasty ramble over the premises, where Edward Payson had spent the morning of his life ; where

“ With hasty steps he brushed the dewy lawn.”

We had the pleasure of being seated in the room where he had so often knelt with the beloved circle in morning and evening devotions ; to visit the graveyard where the ashes of his departed relatives slumber ; and to make a few pleasant calls upon such as had known him, to hear from their lips what they might recollect in the scenes of his youth.

Strangers have stood at Payson's tomb ; they have loved to visit the place of his eminent labors ; to stand in his pulpit, and to inquire respecting him whose honest fame is abroad through the land, honored of God and man. They also repair to the place of his nativity, actuated by no ignoble curiosity, to behold where that life commenced, which had been filled up with so much piety and usefulness.

We called on a lady there, far advanced in years ; when she understood that the object of our visit was to make inquiries respecting Edward Payson ; “ Oh !” said she, “ I have just been reading about him ; why what a creature he was ; what a man he became before he died. When I read about him, his confessions of sin and unworthiness, what can I think of myself.”

Mrs. S—, a very intelligent, elderly lady, of Rindge, under date of October, 1854, writes as follows :—(The

letter is inserted nearly entire, and in the precise language of its author ; it does credit to her understanding and her heart. It contains incidents of sufficient interest, we think, respecting the early-developed traits of Payson's mind and heart, to warrant its insertion here.")

"He was a thorough scholar, but not so quick in his lessons as some others, but would have them complete, and being of a retentive memory, could always bring them up for immediate use, he was obedient to his teacher, and pleasant to his schoolmates ; although he was shrewd, and often would be playing little sly tricks upon his mates, (nothing injurious) but to make sport, and in such a way as not often to give offence ; but if he thought he had wounded any one's feelings, such was his tenderness and humility, he would immediately repair to him with such language as the following : " My dear, do not be offended ; I have done wrong, although I intended no harm. Will you forgive me ? I will do so no more. May I take your hand ? " &c.

"He was observing. On one occasion, (I have heard his mother say,) when he was but a mere child, his father had made an exchange with a neighboring minister, whose discourses were always very short. On his return from church with his mother, he said, " Mamma, I like Mr. A. better than I do papa." Why, my son ? said the parent. " Because," said he, " he does it so much quicker."

"He was modest and free from ostentation, as he grew up into manhood ; he was polite to others, preferring them before himself—was of few words, though not unsocial.

"He was truthful and conscientious. On one occasion there was an article in the house which was found injured and laid away in a corner, rather out of sight ; the offence

was charged to a younger brother, who denied all knowledge of the affair; but his father disbelieved him, and was about to punish him for the offence and for the denial. Just at this time Edward entered, begged the father not to punish brother C., but to punish himself, (i.e. Edward.) for he was the one who had done the deed, and acknowledged his guilt in not confessing it at the time.

“When he was quite a child, as soon as he was able to contemplate, he seemed to have a sense of the Divine presence. On one occasion, the writer was visiting his sister at their father’s house, (at this time he was, perhaps, ten or twelve,) Edward and his sister Grata, brother Charles and perhaps more of the younger ones, with myself, were playing together like other children. I do not know that we were particularly noisy or rude in our play, but Edward felt more of the presence of God than the rest of us, and addressing himself to Charles, said, “brother, God sees us, we are not setting holy examples before our younger brethren. Instead of play, let us read the Bible,” and did so.

“He was, at times, from early childhood, apparently thoughtful of his soul, often speaking to others upon the subject. On one occasion Grata was at my father’s, and he came to carry her home. When he came into the house, after some common-place remarks, said he: “Girls, if we mean to be christians, we must ‘take time by the forelock,’ now is the time. The Bible gives us no promise of another day. We may die this night, if so, where will our souls be?” At this time he was perhaps fifteen.

“He was filial, ever considerate of his parents, obedient to them, or if, at any time, he was otherwise, he



would immediately confess his fault and ask forgiveness, and reform. He was fraternal ; being the oldest of the family, he always manifested a sympathy and tender care for the younger children. On one occasion, when a daughter was born to his parents, ( they had only one daughter among many sons,) he said to Grata, (who was next to himself,) “ you have now got a sister, although I love her and hope not to be wanting in attention to her, yet to you belongs the more especial duty of helping mother to bring her up. There are many things in which she will need a sister’s attention more than a brother’s. I shall soon be away, O, be faithful ; mother, you know, is feeble, father’s time always occupied, and when I am away, on yourself will rest the care which belongs to the oldest in the family—be faithful, again I say, be faithful both to body and soul.”

“ These words, with many more like unto them, his sister communicated to the writer with tears.

“ After he united with his father’s church, he seemed particularly anxious for one in the place whom he knew had long been halting about making a profession ; said he, “ for what are you waiting ? to make yourself better ? I have been waiting for that these many years, and grew worse all the time, and so will you. Christ only can heal the sin-sick soul, go to him in his own way.”

“ At his father’s death, he could not be present at the funeral, but was at his mother’s side to sympathise as soon as possible. His feelings were such that he could not enter his deceased father’s pulpit at that time, but delivered a discourse to the people in the school-house, from Heb.3 : 7, 8, and such a discourse as will not soon be effaced from the minds of many of the hearers.

“Now, sir, accept my best wishes for your success in this undertaking, that the blessing of God may go with your volume as it goes out into the world, and you receive an abundant reward in your own bosom for your labors.”

It comes not within our province to enter with minuteness into Dr. Payson's family relations, either of consanguinity or by marriage; yet as some mention is made in the remarks of the letter just quoted, respecting the family, it gives us pleasure to state that his sister Grata, as we well know from personal acquaintance, was very much of a kindred spirit with her brother Edward. She was married to the Rev. Asa Rand\*, who was settled in Gorham, Me., and died comparatively young, but “full of faith and good works,” as many now living in the place of her husband's labors can cheerfully testify. Madam Payson, the mother of Edward, was accounted a very superior woman, both in intellect and piety. This fact is obvious from the published correspondence between them, and from other sources. A lady of Rindge informed the writer that “Mrs. Payson was esteemed as some *superior being* among them.” It may have been matter of surprise with those who have read the first published memoir of Dr. Payson, that his letters were addressed principally to his *mother*. It is easy to account for this circumstance from

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\*Mr. Rand is now living, and still preaches. He is a sound divine of the old school, and has been a successful preacher. And it gives us pleasure to remark that his memory is still grateful to the people of his first charge; they speak most respectfully of his holy work among them, and the efficiency of his labors, the conservative influence of which is seen there to this day. Mr. Rand was one with whom Dr. Payson more frequently exchanged than with any other. And as much as we esteemed our own minister's preaching, we were always glad to see Mr. R. in the pulpit. He gave us finely-written, strongly-indoctrinated, choice sermons; with not so much of imagination as Dr. Payson, but clear, solemn, practical and pungent.

the early and tender intimacy which usually exists between a mother and a son, and the permanent character of the influence which this early and endeared acquaintance generally produces. The father is "busy here and there," and much of the son's intellectual and moral development is commonly the work of maternal care and solicitude. Doddridge and Newton, and many others, are examples of this maternal influence. No doubt can be entertained in Dr. Payson's case, respecting his father's fidelity to him. But a mother! ye who are sons know all about this endearing relation; how it constitutes one of the last ties on earth that are broken; is the last that grows cold; her name the last that grows tiresome to the ear, of ingenuous filial affection.

Mr. Payson, of Portsmouth, N. H., has furnished us with a part of the Payson genealogy, but we deem it unimportant to say more on that subject, than that Edward Payson descended from the branch at Roxbury, Mass., and that one of the collateral relations was married to "Eliot," the renowned missionary among the Indians.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Dr. Payson in person—Personal habits—His portraits generally incorrect—Anecdote of Henry Clay—Dr. Payson's solemnity of countenance misconstrued—He was not morose nor forbidding—His views of God's purposes with regard to his bodily infirmities—Remarkably free from all approach to rudeness or incivility—His tender and sympathetic feelings—Punctuality in his engagements.

Something will be expected by our readers descriptive of the person and personal habits of the subject of this memoir.

### DR. PAYSON—IN PERSON.\*

In stature, Dr. Payson was of a medium size ; broad-chested, erect in form, and active in his motions. His frame was indicative of great muscular strength, his head large and well-proportioned ; a broad, perpendicular

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\* Says a late Reviewer in the "Living Age:" "People do like to know all that they can about the personal appearance and habits of any celebrated man or woman in whom they take an interest. They instinctively feel that they have a firmer hold of any historical personage, and can understand better all that he did, or could do, when they have authentic information about his face, figure, stature, voice, dress, gait, and ordinary manner of behavior. Nor are they far wrong. When, for example, one is told that Thomas Aquinas was such a big, silent fellow that he used to be called the "large, mute ox of Sicily," one certainly does see the old school man with a degree of corporeal distinctness which assists wonderfully in giving a human interest to his metaphysics. So, again, when we know that Cromwell had a "salmon colored" face, our ideas of the whole history of his



forehead ; hair jet black, which he commonly wore short. His nose was moderately large and well set ; his eyes were dark hazel approaching to black ; full of soul and tenderness of expression — full, but not prominent ; his mouth usually a little open ; his lips seldom compressed. Generally there was considerable color in his face. He walked fast, with a slight inclination of his head, and literally observing the scriptural maxim, “let thine eyes look right on, and thine eyelids strait before thee.” Whether ill or well he always met you with a benignant smile.

We understand a person’s character in proportion as we obtain a correct idea of his personal looks and habits.

We regret to say that no portrait of Dr. Payson which

period will be more correct than if we went, or as many have done, fancying him a swart man.” “Again, much as was written about Coleridge, before Mr. Carlyle published his well-known description of him, we believe that every reader of the book will confess that he has known the sage a great deal better since Mr. Carlyle reproduced, and by clever typographical aid, conveyed to the eye his recollection of the kind of humming snuffle with which the sage spoke,” &c.

Pedants and philosophers are apt to have a horror of such gossip, and do not willingly condescend to it themselves. But in literature, recently, the tide has been going against them, and the “dignity of history” has been obliged to bend its knees a little. It is considered an essential part of the modern biographic art, that in the story of any man’s life, the biographer shall contrive to inweave, not only any interesting letters or other similar emanations from the man’s own pen, that may survive, but also as much information as he can possibly scrape together, respecting the man’s eyes, nose and mouth, his legs and feet, the color of his coat, the dishes he liked for dinner, the hour of his getting up in the morning, his favorite authors and pet quotations, the condition of his aunts and other relatives, and the temper and economic talent of his wife.”

“It is desirable that, in personal delineations of eminent men, we should have as accurate information as possible regarding their faces, voice, and pronounciation, degree and liability to disease, dress and household habits, temper and degree of sociability, attitude, gesture, and back-ground of characteristic circumstances.”

has been published with his life or works, gives a correct expression of his face. Some of them border even on caricature. His picture accompanying the last published edition of his life and writings, is of great artistic excellence ; but like the others, it fails to give you the expression of his remarkable countenance. Any one who has seen this picture, will perceive easily enough that no one else but Dr. P. was intended to be represented by it. The same may be said of some of the others. There is one, however, which was first published, and which may be seen hanging upon the parlor walls of many of his friends, which is altogether the most correct likeness of any that has appeared. It is, upon the whole, a pretty good one. It has something of a sombre cast of expression, but it is he — the man himself, as he appeared when his soul was absorbed in the contemplation of divine truth, especially when publicly addressing immortal souls on the subject of eternity.

We are aware that a delineation of the features may be drawn with much artistical accuracy so that it will be difficult to *point out* any prominent defect ; and yet, a lack of genuine expression will be detected by such as have seen the original. The contour of the head, and the general outlines of the face are correct in all the pictures of him that we have seen, and so of the upper part of his face. The defect of which we complain respecting the last picture which has been published, lies in the region of the mouth. The artist has not given us the true expression of that most significant feature of the human face ; an expression more difficult we are informed, for the limner to catch, and to transfer perfectly to the canvas, than any other. Hence the fact, that there is no other feature of the face, where the slightest

inaccuracy would be so observable, and which so essentially affects the general expression. Some one in describing the face of Henry Clay, remarks, that, "*his mouth speaks for itself.*" "The portrait of a man is sure to be insipid," says one, "unless the artist represents him in the attitude, and under the agency of some great and powerful passion." Said Mr. Clay, in his address to a committee who had presented him with a medal containing his likeness: "The artists have not generally succeeded in taking my features, for my face never long retains the same expression; and especially when I am under any excitement, it changes every moment. John Randolph once paid me the highest compliment I ever received. He said that wherever a debate is coming on, if I can get a sight of Mr. Clay's face, I can always tell which side he is going to take." The difficulty of the limners in securing their object in the case of Mr. Clay and others, where the ever-changing emotions of the soul are constantly chasing each other in their fitful flight from "*gay to grave,*" would not be so great in Dr. Payson's case, where the peculiar and prominent passion of the soul was habitually outspoken and became almost exclusively stamped upon the countenance. Yet it was not dull, but animated and strongly expressive. Not that his countenance never relaxed; it did, frequently, into a heavenly smile.

Whatever idea may be gathered respecting his countenance, from his own account of himself, as portrayed in his writings; or whatever from tradition, by remarks well meant or ill meant, let no one infer that it betokened the gloomy, ascetic, or "*presbyterian sour,*" or that it consisted in the contortions of a sanctimonious hypocrisy. Rather behold a countenance in a high degree

expressive of subdued and humble piety, at times with something of the pensive and heart-sad; exhibiting on the whole, a picture of what would be called the "beauty of holiness," as was seen in Moses when he descended from the mount, or in Stephen's angel-face, "when he looked steadfastly up to heaven."

Infidelity often stood abashed at beholding the man around whom a halo of heavenly light so visibly shone. Instances of such an effect upon the minds of spectators might be adduced. It is said that on a certain journey he stopped at a public house, the landlord observing him as he entered the door, was so struck with his *peculiarly solemn aspect* that it was said to be instrumental in awakening him to his sense of sinfulness and guilt.

If there is discernable in his portraits, generally, something of a downcast look, even though it should be considered as a blemish, still the appearance is in accordance with the original. A lady who had seldom heard him preach, remarked to the writer that Dr. Payson, to her, showed marks of guilt in his countenance. Not that she in reality believed in any such thing, for she knew such a suspicion was groundless. Could she have heard his prayers, his humble confessions of sin and unworthiness, she, judging from her erroneous standard, might have pronounced still more unfavorably upon his character; not knowing the cause of these humiliating acknowledgments. We can easily conceive that a sense of his delinquencies might give to his countenance an expression that would be liable to the misconstruction to which allusion has just been made.

On all faces the spirit is out and commonly undisguised. Should an angel assume an earthly form, how as he spoke, would the angel-spirit give to the exterior



face the very glow of heaven? A fixed habit of thought on any absorbing subject will impart a peculiar and permanent type to the countenance. Not only is it true, that "as a man thinketh in his heart *so is he*," but that as a man thinketh in his heart *so he looketh*. So in Dr. Payson; the deep thoughtfulness of his eye, and the peculiar expression of his whole countenance, told unmistakably of a mind engrossed with the contemplation of high and holy objects. His general appearance being of this serious and subdued character, it was often judged by the superficial observer as savoring of misanthropy or affectation. He was not unsocial in spirit or forbidding in manners. If there were anything of that kind apparent to a stranger, it vanished upon the slightest acquaintance. In the street and in company he sometimes discovered signs of uncommon modesty or diffidence, but it was only the exquisite susceptibility of his delicate and retiring nature.

His nervous system had suffered for a great length of time; a circumstance which will account for the disturbance of that equilibrium of feeling which he confessed and lamented. Hence he could not always be the cheerful, engaging companion, as he otherwise might have been. He was hereby made liable to the attacks of his spiritual foes, which at times were more than equal to all his strength. Reference was once made in his presence, to a brother in the ministry, as a man of a remarkably affable and courteous spirit, of great urbanity of manners and always ready and assiduous to please those who called upon him. Although the remark was not intended as a reproof, yet he probably so construed it, as he immediately replied, "That I can never be." No other apology was offered by him than that which was implied

in his confession, viz : his diseased nervous system. No other apology was needed. That he considered the prostration of his bodily health God's discipline to humble him, and consequently a necessary appendage to his popularity is quite probable. The soarings of his naturally ambitious mind needed restraint, and a more effectual method perhaps could not have been adopted than an affliction of bodily disease. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." That Dr. Payson viewed the matter in this light, we think he once intimated to us. Nevertheless, out of these dreadful mental and physical sufferings, there grew those two sweet and lovely twin flowers of submission and humility, which so adorned his spiritual life. Death crushed them, but they are still fragrant upon his grave.

If this humiliating dispensation were necessary to show him the evil of "seeking great things for himself," yet in his humiliation he was the eagle still ; and although submissive under the chastening rod, yet as that noble bird, shorn of his pinions, or by some untoward accident, confined to the earth, essays to rise, that he may again look upon the sun with an eye unquenched, so his spirit in its intellectual and moral vigor, soared heavenward, untrammelled by infirmity or disease.

With a constitution shattered by every adverse wind ; called to contend with the powers of darkness in no stinted measure ; with the multiplied cares of his family and church and people bearing heavily upon him, and with a keen sense of his responsibilities, it is not surprising that he could find but little time or disposition to attend very particularly to the punctilios of etiquette, or even to the common courtesies of life. Yet we know not

that he ever withheld the hand or heart of welcome from any one who deserved and sought it. "He was affable without an unbecoming familiarity, courteous without officiousness. This is his likeness, and if it is not the picture of a gentleman after the Chesterfieldian stamp, it is one much more desirable.

As his writings evince a mind pure and well-balanced, not starched with an affected preciseness nor dressed up for expected company, (although never appearing in an unsightly dishabille and slip-shod,) so was he in his personal appearance and behavior.

He was ready at all times to consult your interests, and tenderly to regard your feelings. Sad instances of the reverse of such a course in some highly gifted and successful ministers have been witnessed.

We subjoin an extract from one now a respectable and useful minister in this State, who was one of Dr. Payson's hearers: "To my own mind the recollections of Dr. P. were of a very pleasing and satisfactory nature. Well do I remember how he used to meet me at his own house, when I called to see him as a poor sorrowing convicted sinner. How cordial, how kind, how tender and affectionate he always appeared, and what an interest he manifested in my case. Once, I recollect, I called in the afternoon, and he was quite sick, laid upon the sofa, up stairs. At his request I was conducted to his chamber, and when he saw who I was, he apologized very much for my being put to the trouble of coming up stairs to see him; and said that if he had known it *was I*,\* he would have come down. This showed his feelings—his

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\*The gist of this incident is found in the circumstance that the young inquirer, by the loss of a limb in childhood, was under the necessity of using a crutch.

heart ; how ready to suffer himself, to sacrifice his own comfort, in order to help others. His whole aim was to do good ; to benefit the souls of his fellow men, and to honor and serve his blessed Master. And how well he accomplished this, we, who were directed and instructed by him, well know.”

H. I.

A young man from the country, who had become a resident in Portland, and being earnestly desired by his pious mother to attend upon the ministry of Dr. Payson, hesitated not to comply with her request, yet from a misapprehension of the real character of his minister, (whom he supposed from his outward appearance to be morose and forbidding,) had dreaded an interview with him. When, however, an invitation had been given from the pulpit to the young men of his parish, who wished to engage in religious conversation, to meet him at his house, this young man's fears were, in a measure, overcome, and he determined to avail himself of the opportunity. “I went,” said he, “and knocked at the door. Dr. Payson met me, and in the most affectionate manner possible, took me by the hand, and at once seemed to draw *my* heart into *his*.\*

This incident furnishes evidence not only of the yearnings and unslumbering affection which dwelt in the heart of the pious mother for her son far away, exposed to the fascinating influences of the town ; but in this case were also exemplified the happy results of taking heed to a mother's wishes and instructions when removed from her immediate presence. How important are such parental

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\*This young man departed this life at a comparatively early age, but not until he had afforded abundant evidence of useful and eminent piety.



admonitions, as they come like a telegraphic despatch from her heart to his, dotting upon the first opening leaf of the morning, as he awakes, the wishes and the prayers of maternal solicitude.

Why that timidity and reluctance of the youthful stranger to consult his best friend? Could such but look into the heart of the man of God, they would see it burning with an intense desire to "draw their hearts into his." How many instances like the above, does the life of every faithful pastor furnish. How many will remember Dr. Payson with everlasting gratitude, as their spiritual guide; and will bless God that they had the courage to knock at his study door to inquire what they must do to be saved.

The following extract from a letter received by the compiler, will further illustrate the topic under consideration: "From my early childhood I was an attendant on Dr. Payson's ministry, and by him I received the ordinance of baptism. But it was not until I was fifteen years of age, that I became personally acquainted with him. At that period I was under serious impressions, and at Dr. P.'s request, visited him at his house. I went with some degree of timidity, which his pleasant look and manner soon removed. I felt as if talking with a father. He was then in feeble health, his last sickness having begun its fatal work; but with earnestness, he entered into conversation, occasionally asking questions, some of which he answered for me, conjecturing or reading my feelings more correctly than I could express them.

His numerous anecdotes and illustrations tending to show me the way to Christ, deeply impressed me with

the truths he unfolded, and with his unrivalled power of presenting them. That visit, by his request, was frequently repeated. On one occasion, as he lay on his sofa, wrapped in his faded plaid cloak, I hesitated to take a seat for fear of wearying him, and proposed to leave. "Oh, no," said he, "I am glad to see you, take a seat," at the same time, giving a pressure of the hand, and a look that assured me of his tender interest. He then conversed with unusual animation, though with great weariness. On expressing any fear that I should exhaust his patience, as well as his strength, "Oh no," he replied "I have had vastly greater trials of my patience than this," and then stated that he had had frequent visits of persons for years, whose seriousness afterwards came to nothing. He then spoke of a fact which he had noticed in regard to some of these visits, and drew an illustration from it that sometimes, one would come to the very door-steps, and then go back, without coming in. Just so it is, at times, with the sinner in attempting to come to Christ. He takes a number of steps in the way towards Him and when almost to Him, turns and goes back to his former course of sin."

S. T.

Dr. Payson's condescension and sympathy were very observable. He was humble minded. Men of high renown may venture with no hazard of their dignity or respect, upon any act of innocent condescension, aware that their character is established in the public mind. Dr. P.; possessed a true magnanimity so that he could safely condescend to men of low degree and at no sacrifice of true dignity. "A *great* man," says an acute observer of human life, "can *afford* to lose; a little insignificant fellow is afraid of being *snuffed out*"

Dr. Payson's soul was the receptacle of the purest benevolence. The hungry and the naked shared his compassion, and "he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy" in more instances, probably, than was generally known. Especially he sought to "minister to souls diseased." He loved to visit and converse and pray with those who were poor in this world's goods, and who were also "poor in spirit." He spared no pains; he considered no sacrifice too great, to accomplish such a purpose. Perhaps it was the last time he left his house, that he made a visit to a sick daughter of one of his flock, when she received the dying consolations of her dying pastor. Always, and at all times he was the minister, tender, sympathizing. At the fire-side, or by the way-side, or at the dying bed, his instructions were ready and abundant. He was prompt to drop into the ear, some word that might prove as a word in season, to all he met. Nor was his benevolence restricted to his own people. Any opening field which Providence presented as one of usefulness, attracted his attention and secured his spiritual labors. Destitute moral regions in his more immediate neighborhood he visited, and would have done it to a greater extent than he did, had his people thought such a course compatible with his feeble health.

"Unskillful he to fawn, or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashioned to the passing hour.  
Far other aims, his heart had learned to prize,  
More bent to raise the wretched, than to rise;  
But in his duty, prompt at every call,  
He watched and wept, and prayed, and felt for all."

It is worthy of remark, that his consent to have his occasional discourses published, was obtained upon the condition that the avails should be devoted to some benevolent object.

His celebrated "Address on music," which was published in the "Memoir," delivered in his own church at a concert of music in 1809, on which occasion the writer was present, was in behalf of an eminent composer and teacher of music,\* then residing in town, and in somewhat destitute circumstances. Seventy dollars were contributed on the occasion.

He was invited to attend in council at the ordination of the first or second group of missionaries which the American Board sent to the heathen. His services on that occasion will long be remembered by those present.

The Foreign Missionary cause had attracted his favorable attention from the commencement.

Writes a brother in the ministry, "I recollect hearing of the subscription which Dr. P. made to the auxiliary society in Portland, about the year 1812. While conversing on the subject in the parlor where they met to organize, as to the amount they should subscribe annually, he observed, that he could not satisfy his conscience with less than twenty dollars. This seemed a sum much beyond the common standard of liberality, in those days.

This was but a fair specimen of his benevolence which gave a tone to his preaching, and which tended to produce a similar spirit, that has so distinguished his church and congregation.†

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\* Mr. Wm. Cooper, the author of the celebrated Thanksgiving Anthem, and several other choice pieces of music.

† At a certain time, when there were collections taken up in all the churches in town, for some benevolent object, (not specially evangelical,) it appeared on comparison, that Mr. Payson's Society had contributed a larger amount than either of the others. A gentleman belonging to one of the other Societies, and much the wealthiest, on hearing of the fact, inquired of one of Payson's people, why it was that their Society always contributed more than the others. "Why," replied he, "*because we are used to it.*"



## CHAPTER XVII.

Did he ever unbend—The fishing party—Remarkably conscientious—He was choice of his influence—His self-denial as it respects animal indulgence—A probable cause of shortening his life—Yet less of trial and conflict would have made him a very different man—Instance of his regard for a very lovely child.

The opinion prevails extensively, that had Dr. Payson indulged more freely in the socialities of life ; had he been less abstemious, less solicitous respecting the success of his ministry, his health would have had fewer interruptions, and his life have been prolonged. A brother in the ministry, writing to the compiler on that subject, remarks : “I apprehend that Dr. P. had not right views of the limits of human responsibility, and tasked himself for the salvation of souls, beyond what was required of him. But most men err on the opposite side. Had he allowed himself more rest and recreation ; had he tasked himself less in company, and floated more with the free current of conversation, he might have endured longer, and have done more good on the whole.” Prof. Stowe relates a conversation he had with Dr. P. on his death-bed, upon this subject, when the latter acknowledged that he, himself, had misjudged in this matter. Our own opinion on the subject does not differ materially from what others have expressed ; yet it is questionable if Dr. P. had his life to live over again, with the same physical and mental temperament, whether he would have pursued a very dif-

ferent course. It was the man, to be ardent and keenly susceptible ; and with the same amount of piety, and love for souls ; an equal sense of responsibility to his Master, with a consideration of the brevity of life, and the importance of crowding into it as much of usefulness as possible ; and in viewing the truth of the remark, that "That life is long, which answers life's great end ;" and proceeding upon the same maxim, with which he commenced his ministry, that "it is better to wear out than rust out"—he would probably have been the same man still.

And when it is considered that a revival spirit was always kept burning within him, we are to expect that his course would be very much like that of all devoted ministers, in time of a revival, who are generally less under the guidance of judgment than of feeling, and who task their energies, often beyond their strength, like the husbandman, in the busy seasons of sowing and reaping, and hay-making, who puts forth all his strength, unconscious or unmindful of the expenditure ; and yet he did not allow himself to trifle with his health, nor to violate any law of self-preservation.\*

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\*Dr. Payson was not only strictly temperate in all things, but he employed means for the preservation and restoration of health. In his journeys he had this object principally in view. He was in the habit of frequent sea-bathing, and he would continue this practice so late in the season, that he had to break the ice for that purpose. On ship-board, when on his voyage to the South, he used a sea-bath, in doing which he was kindly assisted and accommodated by the steward of the ship.

In the early part of his ministry, as his health began to fail, and he supposed he was soon to be taken from his labors, he applied to the celebrated yet eccentric Dr. D——, of Boston, for medical advice. After the Doctor had made inquiries respecting his patient, his habits, his whereabouts, &c , what, exclaimed he, are you that *bawling Payson* away down east? The remark probably went off with a smile on both sides. His fame, it seems, began to get abroad, although in this case it was not of very enviable notoriety. But ministers must be contented with such compliments as they can get.

Nor are we prepared to say, though with due deference to the opinions of others, and of his own, even, that, constituted as he was, a greater aggregate of labor would have been performed by him, had he reduced his zeal, to the standard of ordinary ministers. There would doubtless have been less wrestling of prayer, less effort, probably, and less success, had his life been spread over forty years, instead of twenty. He seemed to say, "I have a work to perform, and *how am I straitened*, till it be accomplished."

He usually conversed with great rapidity : he preached and prayed with deep fervency of spirit. His mind and heart were full and rich in thought, and he hastened to unlade the treasure, and with feelings almost uncontrollable. His course must speedily be finished. Moreover, we say, that with less ardor and less of inward conflict, he would have been a very different sort of man and preacher. Still, now that the drama of his life is closed, our judgment is, that had he indulged in a more liberal relaxation from the severity of thought, and cultivated a spirit of piety, not less pure, yet more cheerful in its character, he might have remained longer on earth, for the ornament and illustration of piety, and a blessing to the churches. However we may speculate upon the wisdom of his course, or demur at its result, we must leave it with the inexplicable of the Divine counsels ; nor question, but that in this particular instance, some special design was to be accomplished, to us but imperfectly known.

Nor should we slight the lesson it suggests, or attempt to imitate an example in all its parts, which by another might be an unwarrantable or an unavailable experiment. "Every man has his own proper gift from God." While

it cannot be denied that he has left us an example in which there is much that is safe to follow, we shall do well there to abide, and in respect to this extraordinary man, be willing to overlook, in our tenderest sympathies, anything which may have been erroneous in his practice, or mournful in its results.

The question returns, Did he ever unbend? There was nothing in his religion that forbid the innocent gratification of our social nature. He could relate an anecdote, and do it well, and smile as well as others. He seldom indulged in the loud laugh, and never in boisterous merriment. Yet he could relax the fibres of his careworn face, and sometimes relieve his burdened heart, and be the pleasant and amusing companion. There was no austerity in his manner. He occasionally mingled with his people in their recreations.

The writer was one of a number of his church members, who, with their pastor, when we were all comparatively young, joined in a fishing excursion to a place of frequent resort on the sea-shore of a neighboring town. There we knew no distinction. Minister and people were all upon a level. While some were employed in catching the fish, others were busy in preparing them for the pan. Our good minister, we distinctly remember to have seen standing at a bench, with the fish before him, where the master of ceremonies had appointed him his service, which was, to "*take off their skins*;" (a service, by the way, which we all knew he could perform more adroitly in the pulpit, than on the fishing ground.) Whether it was the choice of this "fisher of men" to decline the privilege of being a fisher of fish, we do not now recollect, but we distinctly see him, with knife in hand, standing in



his lot and diligent ; and we remember his remark on the occasion, "I do magnify mine office." He might occasionally, but we think rarely, have indulged in similar recreations, and as a retreat from the severer duties of his profession, conducted with his wonted circumspection, they could not fail to be conducive to his health.

The great dramatist has not hit Dr. P. in the striking description which follows, although others may have so judged :

"He has a lean and hungry look :  
Seldom he smiles, and when he smiles,  
It is in such a sort, as though  
He scorn'd his spirit that could be moved  
To smile at any thing "

He committed not himself by any indiscretion, in speech or behavior, which might diminish your respect for him, when you should see him in the pulpit. So circumspect in all things was he, that you could associate in your reminiscences of him, only what was noble and worthy of a man of God. His intercourse in all his business transactions with his fellow-men, (which, however, were very few,) was of the true Scripture pattern. Paul's description of a bishop, and the Psalmist's of a good man, "who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in the holy place?" "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart," all could be applied to Dr. Payson, without an inward blush or misgiving feeling. That "love of money," too often found even in ministers, was not his besetting sin. Even in early life it did not predominate, for at that period, said a familiar acquaintance of his, "Payson cares nothing about money, but he is ambitious." Of no man could it be more truthfully spoken, that he "kept himself unspotted from the world."

He was remarkably free from every thing that could be called a meddling spirit; or a "busy-body in other men's matters." He never engaged in that idle gossip or officious interference with the secrets of families and neighbors—a mere mail-carrier of scandal—which sometimes sinks the minister into a detestable tale-bearer and mischief-maker. He had not "itching ears," and his people knew it. He was seldom troubled with their complainings. His knowledge of human nature, and appreciation of true ministerial dignity and self-respect, were very apparent in his avoiding an evil which has, in so many instances, marred the usefulness of an otherwise respectable ministry. He gave himself to none as the tool of a party, either in politics or anything else, whereby an opportunity might be afforded to draw from him a remark which might fly as a spark to kindle a fire among his people, which in so many cases has proved disastrous to their best interests. "He kept himself pure." "He set a watch at the door of his lips."

Dr. Payson was very fond of such children as were attractive in their manners. He noticed and loved them. In a family which Dr. P. often visited, there resided a little girl, 6 or 7 years of age. She was of a remarkably amiable temper, intelligent, and in all respects a very beautiful child. There was that in her whole demeanor which had irresistibly attracted Dr. P's attention, and on his visits to the house, he often conversed with her. She was from Boston, and only resided for a few months in this family. Dr. Payson had been called there to solemnize a marriage. After the ceremony had been performed, he called little Mary to him, and asked her "if she were ever at a wedding before." Receiving an answer in the negative, he asked her "if it seemed as she thought

it would?" "No sir, said she, it was a great deal more solemn." Having liberty to visit Dr. Payson at his lodgings, she one day called upon him. After she returned, some one in the family inquired of her, "Well, Mary, what did Mr. Payson say to you?" "O, he said—he said, 'here comes my little Mary; come and sit on my knee.' And he asked me, 'Mary, do you ever pray?'" Probably she answered no. "Well, Mr. Payson said, although God is a great and glorious Being, yet He would hear *my little prayers*, and he said, too, 'I shall die, and I expect to go to heaven, and when I am there, I shall look round to see if little Mary is there; and how I shall feel if I should not see *her* there.'" In less than a year after, little Mary left for her home. Sometime afterwards Dr. Payson was about to visit Boston, and calling upon the family where he had often seen his young friend, he remarked that he wished to go to Boston, as much as any thing, to see little Mary P. This is one instance of the strength of his attachments, showing also that he had imbibed the spirit of Him, who said, "suffer little children to come unto me," &c.

Little Mary P. is now a matronly lady, residing in one of our southern cities. Should her eye ever rest upon these pages, she may recognize herself as the original of this portrait, and she will suffer us to inquire whether "little Mary will, in very deed, meet the good Dr. Payson in heaven?"

## CHAPTER XVII.

His Condescension and Humility, illustrated by several Anecdotes.

His aversion to flattery—Remarkably free from ostentation, flippancy, or superciliousness—Remarks on the danger arising from these traits, in ministers. Peaceable in spirit, yet able and prepared to meet an antagonist, if occasion demanded—Illustrated by an instance during a visit to Saratoga Springs.

No loftiness of spirit, or arrogance of opinion, prevented his giving attention to any reasonable animadversion upon his own performances. We will mention an instance in point.

After his popular sermon before the Maine Bible Society was published, one of his people, having perused it, thought he discovered among its shining excellences, some ambiguity in one sentence which left the sense somewhat obscure. This self-constituted critic, being at his house soon after, ventured (with what might seem at the time, considering the great disparity between the parties, an act of almost unpardonable temerity,) to mention the discovery. Many men in like circumstances would have taken fire at such remarks offered by an inferior; and by a tart reply, or contemptuous silence, would have suffered the remark to pass without further notice. But Dr. P. produced the sermon forthwith, with all the good nature imaginable, while his visitor directed his attention to the passage supposed to be faulty. It is not remembered



what remark he made at the time, by way of explanation; or how guilty and ashamed the fault-finder felt for what might have seemed an impertinent intermeddling; but in another edition that was called for the suspicious sentence did not appear. Upon principles laid down by a popular writer, Dr. P. might have well borne with the critic. "A minister," remarks one, "should consider how much more easily a *weak* man can read a *wise* man, than a wise man can read himself. When Apelles took his stand behind his picture, (in order, probably, that he might hear the remarks which might be made upon it, for his own profit,) he was a *wise man*; and he was a *wise man*, too, when he *altered the shoe*, on the hint of the *cobbler*; the *cobbler*, in *his place*, was to be heard." Dr P. might also have adopted the opinion of Bacon, the celebrated British sculptor, who used to allow others, although of inferior judgment to himself, to remark upon his productions, in order, as he would say, to derive the benefit of a *fresh eye*.

Thus the "meekness of wisdom" sat gracefully upon him; which was seen always naturally adorning his lowly and unassuming demeanor. He could "condescend to men of low estate." Yet "with a large sum obtained he this freedom," for pride of intellect and ambition, were strongly and deeply rooted in his nature, if we may judge from his own confessions. If there was the strong inward struggle, there was also the noble conquest. He sought not flattery, he invited not the spark, for the tinder, he knew was yet in him. Suffering as he did, such intense mental agony, under the prevalence of remaining pride, it is no wonder that he discountenanced every thing that would have a tendency to

excite it. A reprimand, in point, the writer well remembers to have received from him.

In the early part of his ministry, having become almost giddy with his eloquence, we addressed him in a long letter, describing the feelings which his eloquence had awakened in our mind, using at the *commencement* of the letter, some extravagant encomiums upon his preaching. Some time after, we adverted to the letter, and apologized for having therein, in our youthful inexperience, said so many *fulsome* things of him; adding that we ought to have been *ashamed* of it. "*You had*" said he, "*of the first part of it.*" He remembered the letter; so did the writer the reproof.

That he possessed an ample fund of wit and humor, which he could employ successfully in exposing ignorance, and confounding the boastings of shallow minds; or in disarming the enemy of the truth, is seen from incidents related in the "Memoir." His mind was like a constantly-revolving kaleidoscope, presenting images of thought, in rapid and ever-changing combinations of elegance and beauty.

And yet, how free from ostentation, and any effort to show off his talent, so common, and so offensive. How the beauties of his mind, rich and splendid as they were, were seen only through a veil of modesty, which nature and grace had woven; yet seen, as is natural beauty, only to greater advantage through the transparent covering.

He was remarkably free from a flippant, supercilious or boastful air, in the pulpit or at any time, which a course of uncommon popularity has sometimes produced in ministers. There were no airs of an unseemly inde-

pendence, or eccentricity, such as are sometimes seen in the pulpit; as if the incumbent had said, "I am king here." No Jehu spirit which says, "Come, see my zeal for the Lord." No rough handling and turning over the leaves of the Bible, with such an air, as if "familiarity with it had bred contempt." He was a man of very ardent temperament, yet he was a sober-minded man. It was not his manner to stand in the pulpit to send up sky-rockets to amuse or to amaze a staring, gaping congregation. He had more consistent views of his high calling. Eccentric he was not, yet the elastic and electric power, he possessed in a high degree. He made this power to be *felt* by his audience. Like the main-spring of the watch, it imparted power and motion to the whole machinery. He was depressed often, but never unduly elated with success. Joyful he was at times, beyond measure, when God smiled upon his soul, or gave him encouragement respecting the fruits of his labors, yet how far from arrogating anything to himself.—In his brightest moments, and at the "full sea" of his prosperity, we could almost hear him chiding himself, "I charge my thoughts, be humble still;" and, as far as we could see, his thoughts were obedient to the charge. He never seemed to take any unwarrantable liberties with the feelings of his people, or with the customs of society; as in his approaches to God, there was no unseemly familiarity; nor in his intercourse with his fellows, was there anything assuming. His mind was well ballasted. This was a merciful dispensation; otherwise, as he acknowledged, he would have been ruined; "The proud waters would have gone over his soul;" the gale had been too violent for his safety. Who has not

trembled for some great reformer, or preacher, riding upon the wave of popular applause ; for example, such men as Whitefield and Wesley, and others in modern times in similar circumstances. What minister, without trembling, ever reads of Herod, "eaten of worms and giving up the ghost, because he gave not God the glory ?" or of Hezekiah, humbled of God, because in the naughtiness of his pride he cherished feelings of self-complacency in making parade of his wealth to the princes of Babylon ? Who has not more than suspected this hidden abomination to be the cause of God's withholding his Spirit from churches, or suspending it in revivals, and of his blowing upon the offerings of ministers and churches, and thus blasting their labors.

"For pride, that busy sin,  
Spoils all that I perform ;  
Curs'd pride, which creeps securely in,  
And swells a guilty worm."

We see, at such times, that the hand of God is needful to press hard upon us to keep down this rebel emotion. God "hides pride from man," sometimes by hiding him in the grave ; at other times by the infliction of some severe discipline. God "left Hezekiah that he might try him, and that he might know what was in his heart." A discipline, painful as it is, is often necessary, and always salutary. One of the "evils to come," from which "some are taken away" by death, may be the disastrous consequences which are sometimes attendant upon popular applause, and which have caused the shipwreck of the soul, or at least have occasioned his sun to set in a cloud. A melancholy instance, in a popular minister, of frailty and sin, which came to his knowledge, probably suggested the text from Hosea XIII : 1, from which we heard him



preach. "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel, but when he offended in Baal, he died." Who knows but that Bunyan, ever vile in his own eyes, had he lived to hear the universal trumpet-blast that now sounds his fame, might have been overwhelmed and ruined? Charitable as Dr. Payson was towards young converts, in judging of the genuineness of their christian hope, yet in his preaching and conversation, he would closely sift and try them, and would have them narrowly examine their hopes and hearts. He particularly recommended President Edwards' "Treatise on the Affections," as an important "aid," for this purpose; a book which is sure to destroy the hope of the hypocrite, and to shake that of the true convert; yet the latter will come forth from the fiery ordeal, with an increased confidence that all is well. In the words of another, "When I have doubts, I light my lamp, take the key, go down cellar, examine the arches on which my building rests; if I find all right, I go back, blow out my light, and hang up the key."

He was particular as to the books his people read.—The writer mentioned to Dr. Payson that he had been reading "Law's Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life," a book, by the way, of which, I think Dr. Johnson speaks very highly. It is a sort of half-quaker book, yet contains very good maxims. "Take care," said Dr. P., "that it does not make an Arminian of you." Yet, as a general thing, he approved of the book.

He highly approved of devotional works, such as Thomas a Kempis' Imitation of Christ. Madame Guion's treatise, I think he did not object to. He, of course, had no sympathy with Roman Catholics, yet he possessed

a commendable liberality and candor, in approving whatever of genuine piety he found in any men or writings. Whatever tended to inflame or strengthen the pious affections, he more highly appreciated, thanbooks on speculative or mere doctrinal subjects.

He has had the reputation of being a great "novel reader." We do not undertake to decide upon this question. That he devoured "romance and fiction," and every species of literature, in any quantity, during his youth-time, is well known. To what extent he controlled or repressed that craving for works of the imagination, in his sedate and more sober manhood, or after he became a minister; or what were his views with respect to this practice, we have not sufficient means to state with certainty.

If he allowed himself in the practice at all, it was to him only a mere pastime, a relaxation from severer studies and pursuits, which in his case might be productive of no deleterious results. We think he once remarked, speaking on this subject, to this effect, "that a person might gratify his mental appetite in whatever reading, his own observation had taught him, was not detrimental to spiritual-mindedness." That he was opposed to literature of a demoralizing character, we cannot doubt, and that his outspoken and hearty condemnation would fall upon the trashy productions of most modern novelists, were equally safe to remark. Whatever in books or amusements generally, that did not in some way strengthen and adorn the mind, and increase its capacity of usefulness, and thus promote either directly or indirectly the good of our fellow men, and God's glory, he would not encourage.

As respects ministers, old or young, they *must* keep

their capital good. They must read, and the greater mount and variety of knowledge they obtain, other things being equal, the more probability of their being useful and successful ministers, and of securing the attendance and attention of their people. Ministers need every help to adorn and elucidate their discourses, in order to meet respectfully the emergencies of the times. Some have more of a ministerial *tact* than others, and make a little knowledge go a good way in a sermon, eking it out as they do their scanty salaries. Some depend more upon their original resources ; and some have to trade all their life-time upon commission, or a borrowed capital ; always borrowing, borrowing, and die bankrupts at last.

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“ The glory of my glory still shall be,  
To give all glory and myself to Thee.”

The crowning grace in Dr. Payson's character was his *humility*. This was a “ diadem of beauty,” and as a chain of gold round about his neck, which set off to great advantage his other rare qualities. That he could have borne his popularity and success so well, preserving as he did, so humble and unostentations a demeanor at all times and under all circumstances, is proof of the strength and genuineness of his piety.

Others have made more noise and flourish, and kept the world more astir by their zeal and eloquence, who have, nevertheless, exhibited sad proof of a vain-glorious spirit.

“ For I am meek and lowly in heart !” What words were these, proceeding from the lips of the eternal Son of God ! Which, of all the attributes that constitute his perfect character, appears so lovely, or which so endears Him to his followers, or excites so warm an admir-

ation of his inestimable worth ? Take away this lovely feature of lowliness and condescension from the character of the "Friend of sinners," and let only his unveiled power and majesty be seen, and what a different Savior do we behold ! Heaven's glorions King, how humble when clothed in flesh. And in Dr. Payson's case, or in any other, all were a ruin ; piety in ruins, a soul in ruins, and blasted all our hopes ; and Dr. Payson had made no other end than Herod made, had not God kept him, and bruised him, and shorn him at times of his wonted strength. How patiently he sat while under the disciplinary process, and how comely did he appear, clothed with the heaven-wrought robe. How much of the "same mind was in him which was also in Christ Jesus."

We say of Dr. Payson that although "his spear was like a weaver's beam," yet he was akin in no degree, to the boastful Goliahs, who bluster in the world. He was calm and peaceable in spirit ; in no way desirous of manifesting a menacing attitude, or displaying a belligerent spirit. He possessed great resources, upon which he could fall back in case of emergency. He was not cowardly when duty called him forth in defence of truth. He would meet the enemy in honorable contest. He was *still* about it: as Dr. Todd remarks of one, "He takes his aim ; there is but little noise ; but go and you will find the game dead upon the spot."

We have sometimes loved to compare Dr. Payson to a first-rate ship-of-the-line, as she floats upon the deep, with every facility on board to demolish a fortification ; to sink or wreck the unfortunate enemy that shall be within reach of her metal, or to grapple with the enemy "yard arm and yard arm"—although with no gun seen, every port-hole closed, and thereby concealing her mighty enginery :



no flag streams in defiance ; no peal of battle thunder sounds to action ; and yet how amply prepared, should the emergency arrive ; all her resources are in readiness.— The gallant commander, self-possessed, and conscious of his superior prowess, surveys his antagonist without misgiving, and unappalled.

At all times, strong in a good conscience, unflinching where duty prompted, he had the moral courage to do what his Bible dictated. This trait of character is illustrated by the following incident :

“ A few years before his death, he visited at their most crowded season, the Springs of Saratoga. He sojourned at the principal hotel, where he was surrounded by fashionable and distinguished visitors. From day to day he mingled in general intercourse, and took his full share in conversations on philosophical, literary and general topics, to the delight of every one. At length he proposed that on a coming day, which he named, the hour after dinner should be devoted to religious conversation. Some of his most intimate friends were fearful lest the talent by which he was surrounded, which, alas, was lamentably stained with infidelity, should prove more than equal to his pious zeal, or that he might regret that he made the proposal. At length the hour arrived, and after the cloth was removed, he found himself surrounded by a very large assembly. He sat for some time in deep and solemn silence, and then made some remarks, simply to elicit observations and inquiries in return. A leading statesman rose, determined to try the Doctor's strength to the utmost, and made an attack upon Christianity, with great energy and boldness. Interest was excited to its greatest intensity, as the worthy minister rose to reply.

With candor, clearness, and power, he re-stated the strongest arguments, which his opponents had brought forward, and then with simplicity and eloquence, which absolutely electrified his audience, he demolished every objection they had urged, and won the unbounded admiration of all who heard him ; every one of whom declared that they had never before listened to such strains of wisdom, benevolence and piety." But we are aware that he went not forth to the encounter " at his own charges."

It is easy to conceive that his high regard for the truth, a conviction of his responsibility to his Master as a defender of the truth ; the favorable opportunity presented, which might not again occur, to assail the brazen front of infidelity, which had set itself in array against him ; composing an assemblage of the learning and talent, and wealth and influence of the place, would awaken within him a sense of his duty to improve an occasion thus providentially afforded him. And it is gratifying to record that the standard he had unfurled, was permitted to wave triumphantly over the defeat of his opposers ; that he completely demolished their arguments ; that the spectators beheld the image they had set up, like Nebuchadnezzar's weak and vulnerable at the very spot where it needed strength ; "broken to pieces, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor."

With all his valor and straight-forwardness, he had not the rigidity of an iron self-will. He was no bigot, however his enemies may have so accused him. He could " become all things to all men " in the true Scriptural sense. Like an elastic rod, he might be bent up double, when condescension and humility demanded it, nor were his self-respect and honor injured by yielding : — the bent rod became straight again. His noble mind could freely

condescend, within any reasonable limit, to meet the opinions or even the whims and prejudices of those he judged sincere, yet it scorned an abject servility to any men or measures. He had much of that "charity that beareth long and is kind." "Come again and again," was his language to inquirers, and his patience with their dullness or their doubts or ignorance, seemed never to be exhausted.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

It is not known that he possessed any musical talent. He was not a fastidious or hypercritical hearer—His kind feelings towards young ministers—An illustration—His appreciation of talent—Several anecdotes furnished by a minister once a member of his church—his impatience at mental dulness—Our feelings of veneration while in his presence—Authors he recommended.

It is not known that he possessed any musical talent, or at least, that he frequently attempted to cultivate it. We are not aware that he was ever heard to utter a single note in the performance of social or public praise; from what cause, it is not certainly known. It may have been from a consciousness of his deficiency in musical skill, or from diffidence. A voice like his, deep-toned, and of so much compass and melody, we should have pronounced at once, susceptible of most successful musical cultivation.

The writer remembers being at his house, and alone with him, when he made the suggestion that we should try our voices together by way of singing a tune. We did but very imperfectly succeed. It was almost an entire failure. He remarked that he was afraid of the sound of his own voice. He never repeated a proposal of the sort to the writer, and whether, in fact, the fright and the defeat should be attributed more to one than to the other, it were quite unimportant to decide.



He was not fastidious or hypercritical, when listening to the sermons of others, and yet we believe that no man of ordinary abilities, could preach before him, and not sensibly feel his presence. The writer was occasionally called to preach in his pulpit, with the pastor close at his elbow. Some will remember that the original pulpit of that house was small, and nearly circular, somewhat resembling a tub, and but just large enough to contain two persons. For our encouragement, however, we felt that we had one near to keep us in countenance, who we were well assured would be ready to endorse the truths which we advanced ; and standing there by the Doctor's special invitation, and under his wing, "no man's heart need to fail him." He made all reasonable allowance for young preachers, and sympathized with them in their first attempts at preaching. One of his students in divinity, immediately after being licensed in 1817, was invited to supply the pulpit of Dr. Payson for five or six Sabbaths, while he was absent for his health. On his return, he met his young pupil who had supplied for him, and aware of his fearful apprehensions of appearing for the first time in the pulpit, and before a Portland audience, said very pleasantly, " Well, it wasn't such a terrible thing to preach as you thought for, after all, was it ?" The same student afterwards settled in the ministry, and being in town on a certain Sabbath, Dr. P. addressed a note to him, during the intermission, requesting him to preach for him in the afternoon ; and knowing his willingness to excuse himself from preaching before him, he appended to the note, " You must not say no." The invitation and the injunction, speaks for itself. They show the friendliness of his motive and of his heart. He assumed no

authority over his pupils: his criticisms and remarks were just and wise, yet made in the spirit of great tenderness.

Turn your eyes towards him as he sat in the pulpit, with some young man who was officiating, and you would see him with his head bowed down, his face more than half concealed under a fold of his cloak, (if it were a time for cloaks,) apparently listening with the docility of a child; while we felt that, as preachers, we were not worthy to be "set with the dogs of his flock." Although his clear and intuitive sense of excellence, both in literature and theology, qualified him to pronounce with the justest criticism upon any performance; yet he would seem to divest himself of his critical acumen for a season, that he might receive edification from the truth presented, however homely or unattractive the garb in which it appeared.

He seldom gave you his opinion, if solicited, respecting ministers, or their public performances. "You must not," said he, once to the writer, who had requested his remarks about a certain preacher, "You must not ask the opinions of ministers respecting each other."

Dr. Payson, as we have said, had a kind and sympathizing spirit. He took a deep interest in the welfare of his flock, and especially in such as had prepared for the ministry under his instructions. The following incident may serve to illustrate still further this trait in his character.

A young man, a member of his church, and his student in theology, after he had been settled in the ministry a year or more, happening to be in Portland, was in-

vited to preach the regular Thursday evening lecture.\* On the evening referred to, there was present, the Hon. M. C——, a very wealthy citizen, who belonged to another religious Society in town, who occasionally dropped in of a Thursday evening, esteeming it a privilege to hear a preacher of Dr. Payson's eminence, but who, on this occasion, must have been sadly disappointed in not hearing the minister he expected. A deceased son of this gentleman, of very precious memory, then, and still, had befriended this young minister to whom the father had been listening, and but for whose pecuniary aid and sympathy, it is doubtful whether he would have entered the ministry.†

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\*These weekly lectures, he invariably sustained, and they were rendered specially useful because of the opportunity of attending, thereby afforded to such as did not belong to his parish. These lectures were highly accounted of by Dr. Payson himself; so much so, that when in health, and civility required him to invite a brother minister, who called upon him on the day of the meeting to officiate in his stead, he said it was like having his supper stolen from him. To preach the gospel, was considered by him as the greatest of luxuries. He acknowledged that no affliction seemed harder to bear, than to be laid aside from his labors.

†Theological seminaries had no existence in this country, when Dr. Payson commenced preparations for the ministry. Something less than a year had he devoted to his own immediate preparation for his work, which was spent with his father at Rindge, N. H. We think he favored the method of private theological education. With a mind of the first order, and having enjoyed the advantages of a finished college education, and the benefits of the household instructions of a pious father and mother, and with a heart deeply imbued with the spirit of piety, he could not but be eminently qualified for the work of an evangelist, although he had not availed himself of the more thorough discipline of any Theological school. During the early part of his ministry, he superintended, wholly or in part, the theological studies of several young men, preparatory for the sacred office. Several of them are living, and active in the ministry. Their names are as follows: \*B. F. Farnsworth; Josiah G. Merrill; Nathan Douglas; John H. Ingraham; Isaac Weston; \*Charles Freeman; \*Samuel Johnson; John A. Douglas, and Phillips Payson, (his brother.)

\*Deceased.

At the close of the services, Dr. Payson and the young minister walked down the aisle together, and meeting with the Hon. gentleman referred to, just coming out of the pew, he took pains to introduce his pupil as a beneficiary of his deceased son, and stated to him the facts in the case, concluding with the remark, You see, sir, that your son, "being dead, yet speaketh." The venerable father seemed much affected by the remark. The scene was suited to show the happy results of affording aid to indigent students in a course of preparation for the ministry, as well as to awaken in the mind of the beneficiary a deeper sense of his obligation to his patron, and to place in a very amiable light the character of Dr. Payson. This and other incidents in his life which appear in this work, and which may seem trivial, happily illustrate his true benevolence of character.

It was not a common practice with him to preach his sermons a second time to his own people; although we perceive in the "Memoir" that circumstances were once such, that he was compelled to do so for a season. He did not consider the practice reprehensible, in himself or others. The effect, however, which was produced upon his own mind by a frequent repetition of his discourses may be learned from the following incident:

While on his journey through Essex Co., Mass., preaching in behalf of the Education Society, he stopped in Topsfield, at the house of Doctor C. Doct. C. inquired of him relative to the effect which a frequent repetition of his sermons produced upon his own mind, he answered, "It is like the operation of an intellectual emetic."

Writes the brother more than once referred to, "Dr. Payson seemed to be too impatient of common dullness.



I called upon him one evening when he was sitting at his fireside with a man of rather superior solid talents, but without much vivacity. He seemed uninterested, and his visitor looked absolutely dejected, but appeared to brighten up at the coming in of one who could sympathize a little more with him than Dr. Payson did. I once met Dr. P. riding in a chaise in Portland with an aged gentleman, whose presence seemed to give an unusual glow of animation and pleasure to Dr. P.'s countenance. Who, thought I, can this be, who interests Dr. P. so much? I learned afterwards that it was Rev. Dr. Spring, of Newburyport.

Dr. Payson was invited to attend an ordaining council at Boston. He took a lively interest in attending, but the main interest seemed to be, that he should there meet the Rev. Lyman Beecher. We see nothing reprehensible in this, it is no honor to visit objects of curiosity. It was difficult for men or books to please him, as the men or books must be in the finest style of genius, spirit and originality; or rather they must be of a peculiar spirit. I spoke to him once in commendation of "Chalmer's Astronomical Discourses," and he answered with rather faint pride, but "Henry Martin's Memoir," he warmly commended." C. F.

It is true that our pastor had to put up with much ignorance and dullness in those who visited him; yet, to the sincere inquirer, though dull and illiterate, he was very forbearing. It was a remark of his, "whoever wishes to see me, is the person I wish to see." He might not always be disposed, owing to peculiar circumstances, to converse with his wonted interest; especially might it have a deadening effect upon him, to find in his

visitor one who had little or nothing to say on the subject of religion. And as we felt our conscious inferiority to him, our lips would be often shut, and then the conversation would necessarily flag, and it is no wonder that the interview should become dull and tedious.

His appreciation of the value of time was such, that he could not but be uneasy, when he saw the hour was spending unprofitably. Yet his presence was not such as to forbid confidence, although it was difficult to unbend before him. You could not well take liberties with him.

His predilections for men of superior piety and talents, as remarked by our brother last quoted, are easily accounted for on the principle that "like rejoices in like." He had to put up with the inexperience and ignorance of new converts, as all ministers have to do, but he would do it gracefully and pleasantly.

The writer remembers that soon after he had indulged a trembling christian hope, he was walking with Dr. P. in the street, and wishing to say something to him concerning his newly cherished feeling, remarked to his pastor that he was afraid he had not repented sufficiently of his sins. It may easily be conjectured how a man of Dr. P.'s knowledge and experience in religious matters must have felt, at such a simple and artless expression of our fears, as he replied with a good-natured smile, "I guess you have not," as if he had said, "*who* has ever sufficiently repented?"

## CHAPTER XIX.

His views of church discipline—Remarks on the same subject.

Dr. Payson's views on this subject led him to adopt no arbitrary or rigorous measure. He favored a prompt decision, coupled with sympathy for the offender. Although he was a most commendable pattern himself; in all things "pertaining to life and godliness," and God had kept him from falling, yet he well understood the clause in his church covenant, which we have often so feelingly heard him read, "considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted." With a mind harassed and lacerated as his had been, and still was, and under a deep sense of remaining depravity in the christian's heart, he was prepared to look with a lenient eye upon the backslider, especially if there appeared signs of penitence.

"He best can bind who has been bruised oft."

In cases of discipline, where the person deserves the just frown of the church, he recommended promptness and decision. He would connive at no delinquency; he would have no sin covered up, which the honor of Christ, and the purity and propriety of the church required to be made public. Yet he has remarked that a christian must be exceedingly ignorant of his own heart, his frailty and dependence who should be unduly severe in his feelings, towards a fallen disciple.

He recommended, not an implacable, but a charitable and forgiving temper towards the delinquent. "Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." "It is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression;" and is it not the duty of the church, with the utmost readiness to embrace an offending member, who would return, with the true spirit of confession and penitence.

We remember reading, many years ago, a narrative of a ship's company being compelled to leave their sinking ship, and to betake themselves to the long-boat. In this exposed situation, far off upon the wide ocean, they were reduced to a very short allowance. In order to make their scanty provisions hold out, they were compelled, after drawing lots, to cast one of their unfortunate crew overboard. He submitted to his fate as well as he could, yet life was dear to him, and he kept near to the boat. He grasped the gunwale and held on. With a single blow of the sword from the officer, his arm was severed from his body. He dropped, but recovered his hold with the other hand: another stroke of the sword, he fell armless into the ocean, but he kept by the boat, holding up his two bleeding stumps. A spectacle so piteous they could not behold unmoved; they took him into the boat.

The illustration is imperfect, for "parables do not always go upon all-fours," yet a principle is involved in this narrative, that suits our present purpose. This man clung to the boat. So we think that when, by a majority of the brethren of a church, one has been justly considered worthy of censure, and cut off from the special privileges of God's covenanted people, it is a good sign to see him *clinging to the church*; and even if he feels



that he has been hardly dealt with, yet to have such a regard for the church, as an institution of God, as to say, "With all thy faults I love thee still." Her, I will still respect and honor. It is something of the spirit that says, "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him." And if conscious that the rod of discipline has fallen righteously, then how in accordance with right feelings is it, to justify the disciplinary acts; to acknowledge guilt, and return with penitence. He then takes the part of the church which acts for God, against himself; and the "*two bleeding stumps*," emblematical of a bleeding and broken heart, have a voice of contrition and entreaty, to which no church of Christ should turn a deaf ear. They will arise, and take him again to their bosom.

And yet a spirit entirely opposite to that which we have recommended, is sometimes seen manifested by persons whom the church has seen proper to remove from its fellowship.

There is the raven professor, let loose from the church, who finds his home, and a congenial element, upon the troubled waters of a world, under its Creator's curse; while the peaceful, dove-like disciple, returns with the olive-leaf in her mouth; with a spirit, chastened and subdued, wishing to cleave closer than ever to the church, clinging with a firmer, and more affectionate grasp, to the very arm that has inflicted the just and salutary blow, repeating, never more sincerely, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." "My soul shall pray for Zion still."

Although we deem it possible, for a church, from misinformation and prejudice, to err in judgment and in practice, and to commit an unjustifiable act of dismem-

berment ; yet we believe cases are very rare, where a church is censurable for an act of discipline, that has been the result of patient, faithful, and prayerful investigation.

We remember it was Dr. Payson's opinion, that in cases of *public* offence in a member, it was not necessary for the church to take the steps enjoined in Matthew, xviii. which Dr. P. thought were intended only for private offences, but to proceed at once, on hearing of the offence, to cite the delinquent member before the church, to answer to the report, now already public, agreeably to the Cambridge Platform of Church Discipline.

## CHAPTER XX.

His concentration of mind, and unity of purpose—Carefulness to avoid whatever might hinder his usefulness—Seldom seen in the busy crowd—Great utility of his pastoral visits—The happy disappointment.\*

There are many elements of native character, both of genius and disposition, as well as of physical temperament, which those who enter the ministry must and will bring with them. These peculiarities in almost endless variety, will be seen more or less manifested; diffusing their influence and giving a complexion to the whole ministerial life—sometimes for good and sometimes for evil.—Grace does not entirely transform all our habits, natural tastes, or predilections. Luther will be Luther, and Berridge will be Berridge, and Rowland Hill will be himself, and so will John Wesley.

Where it is found, however, that the peculiarities of ministers tend to diminish their usefulness, these peculiarities should be brought strictly under the restraint of religious principle; it may be that they should be overcome or abandoned altogether, according to the requirement of Christ, that “if thy right eye offend thee pluck it out.”\*

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\*An eminent clergyman in England, being an excellent performer on the violin, and finding that his passion for music interfered with his official duties, cut the strings of his violin at once. The same man, being also a connoisseur in paintings, on visiting

It is admitted that circumstances do sometimes allow and even require a minister to engage in pursuits foreign to his sacred profession, and from which he would gladly be relieved ; yet to sink the minister into the astronomer or geographer or school-master, (if such a course can well be avoided,) useful and respectable as are these professions ; or to take much interest in political or commercial concerns, must lead to a bewilderment or dissipation of mind, and leaves him only half minister and half something else ; a mixed up character of lecturer, politician, financier, or whatever, and thus unquestionably injuring his usefulness as a minister. Nor is this evil confined to the minister alone, but is felt in its withering and scathing influence through the entire church and parish. With respect to Dr. P., how truly it can be said, that he avoided everything that had a tendency to divert his attention from his main pursuit.

A very great student he was, of the works of God and man, for such studies could contribute to his usefulness as a minister of Christ. This end secured, it sufficed. Whatever may have been his cherished and permanent natural tastes and predilections, if they obstructed his course of usefulness, he relinquished them all for the attainment of an infinitely greater good. None could say more sincerely,

“And if I might make some reserve,  
And duty did not call ;  
I love my God with zeal so great,  
That I should give Him all.”

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a sick chamber, became so much interested in a picture that hung in the room, that he found his attention was diverted from the great object of his visit. He sought to modify and subdue a taste that he perceived to be so injurious to his usefulness—an example of self-denial and fidelity to his Master, worthy of imitation.



His resources, natural or acquired, ample and rich as they were, were all concentrated upon one single point—one grand object. You see this principle adopted in the following, as was seen in a thousand other instances. Conversing with one of his church-members on adopting means of doing good, said he : “Make it a rule to pray for a blessing upon every one you meet.” How suggestive the idea ; and the practice followed as it probably was, by himself, it shows what a well-spring of benevolence was in his heart, and how nearly he practiced the Apostle’s injunction, to “pray without ceasing.”

Dr. Payson’s presence anywhere, could not fail to be impressive. There was a character in it, and in all that he said and did ; his remarks were so peculiar, striking, original, and so full of wisdom and piety, having for their aim the promotion of the best interest of the company in which he mingled, that the interview could never be forgotten. Wherever he went, he left his peculiar mark, as the seal leaves its impression upon the wax, not easily effaced. He was the christian minister ; the holy man of God, with a heart overflowing with benevolence and zeal for his Master, whether he mingled with the promiscuous crowd, or visited in the retired family.

We have abundant proof of this disposition in Dr. Payson from the relation which is given of his visits in the “Memoir,” as well as what may be found in the present volume. The “ruling passion” was out, and apparent to all observers. He had a subject ready for every occasion, and a remark for every individual. He was timely, seasonable, appropriate, and effective, “like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” His visits were never idle or unproductive of good.

The Rev. Mr. S., now in advanced life, and residing in R., Mass., remarked to the writer, that although he had never known Dr. Payson, except by report, yet he remembered an incident respecting him, which took place in the town of M. This was probably during the journey, when Dr. Payson was engaged in preaching in behalf of the Education Society.

He was employed on week days in presenting his cause to different congregations, and made his arrangements to be at some particular place on the sabbath, as might best suit his convenience.

He had finished his weekly tour, and on a Saturday evening, he drew near to the village just referred to, where he expected to occupy the pulpit on the sabbath. No mention was made of there being any other minister present at the time.

In those days, Dr. Payson performed his journeys usually on horseback. Fatigued and almost sick, he stopped at a house to which he was directed for entertainment over the sabbath. It seems that the good lady of the house was not very favorably impressed with the appearance of her guest, who had "turned in," wan and weary, probably indisposed for much conversation, yet announcing himself as the expected preacher for the morrow. She was ruminating in her mind as to the character of the bill of fare which was to be furnished for their sabbath entertainment, and judging from the appearance of the sick and dusty traveler, her anticipations were not the most flattering. However, she respected ministers, and doubtless her christian courtesy was on the alert to make her guest comfortable; and besides, the apostle's injunction might have come into her mind, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for [thereby some have enter-

tained angels, unawares." And how did she know but that amid all the obscurity and dust that surrounded the man of God, there might be something wrapped up in that plain and homely exterior which contained the elements of talent and piety.

We can easily conceive how the Rev. divine, after a night's refreshing repose, began to feel his latent energies arousing, and that from revenge for his unsightly appearance the night before, in a strange family, they would assume something of their original and wonted power; and that with the rays of a sabbath sun shining into his chamber, he would be reminded of the day and the scenes he had aforetime enjoyed, and would begin to feel the accustomed rapture of devotion kindling in his soul.

He is called to the morning's repast. In asking a blessing upon his food, a few words expressive of gratitude and obligation fall reverently from his lips, like drops before the shower, telling what was to come.

Anon the hour of morning devotion arrives; the gathered family are in their place, and his voice is heard in reading from the Book of God — perhaps followed with words of wisdom. He is upon his knees, and he pours out his full heart in solemn prayer. It is no wonder that the good lady of the house, by this time, is beginning to perceive her probable mistake; and that she thought again of that passage about "entertaining angels unawares." But the hour of public assembling arrives, and the stranger-preacher is seen in the pulpit, with every wondering eye fastened upon him, and curiosity wide awake to know who it is that is about to address them in the name of the Lord.

His very looks indicate that a man of God and a man of might, too, is indeed before them, when in tones of subduing power and richness, and with his accustomed fervency of spirit he addresses the Throne of Grace. The pious of his congregation are wishing by this time, for wings, that they may accompany their spiritual leader up to the very portals of heaven. He reads the hymn in a manner in which they had not been accustomed to witness, and they are prepared in a measure, to listen to the message of terror or glad tidings which soon burst upon the astonished ear, with such eloquence that every mind is attent, every eye chained, and every sleeping conscience aroused.

It was then, without question, that his hostess had it made out to her to a demonstration, when the sick and worn-out traveler of the Saturday evening stood up before the astonished congregation, with the solemnity of eternity upon his countenance, that the "angel" had indeed appeared. Surely if there can be such a thing as an agreeable disappointment, the good lady must have enjoyed it to her heart's content. Afterwards she became much interested in Dr. Payson.

Dr. Payson's surviving friends love to bring him back to life awhile — in imagination — that they may again fasten their eyes upon his beloved countenance, or hear again the voice which was once as the most delightful music to their ears. They would see him as they had been wont to do, on horseback, riding with a physician's speed through the streets, in pursuit of health, or on errands of usefulness and mercy, or walking with hasty steps, and with modest and unobtrusive mien, with his eyes looking straight forward, and scarcely appearing to notice surrounding objects. Yet, if you were near



enough to him, you would have met the deep flash of his eye, and witnessed the heaven of his countenance, which told of the busy and meditative mind.

“A man’s character,” writes our correspondent, “is often exemplified in the domestic animals he keeps. No kind man will keep an ill-natured, dangerous dog. Dr. Payson, when I knew him, had a horse that was suited to his spirit. He rode considerably on horseback then. A gentleman observed that Dr. Payson’s riding so rapidly over the rough, frozen mud of the streets, was perilous. He was spoken to on the subject of his fast riding, when he remarked that his rule was to keep a horse well, and lose no time on the road.

He had occasion to be in Boston on a Tuesday to attend an ecclesiastical council; he set off early on Monday morning and rode that day seventy-seven miles, to Newburyport, and the next day to Boston, thirty-three miles, when he observed, his horse seemed able to travel thirty miles further.\*

The movements of his mind were rapid, so were those of his body; and thus he desired all movements around him to be.”

He was seldom seen with the mingled group at the corners of the streets, discussing the topics of the passing hour. Aware of the temptation, and having learned to appreciate the value of time, and of ministerial character, he would not expose himself to the snare

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\*This would seem to be rather hard and fast riding for a minister, noted as ministers and sailors are for driving with great speed. He was, however, a “merciful man,” and doubtless well knew the power of endurance which his beast possessed; and by taking an early start, and with a good horse and well kept, it may not be considered as unusual to perform such a journey in the time he did.

or run the unnecessary hazard, even though the course he adopted may have exposed him to the remark of being austere and unsocial in his manners.

It may be said by some that here, too, he erred in judgment, and that a less restricted course in such matters might have rendered his life more useful, and lessening if not entirely removing the predjudices of a misjudging world, and silencing their illiberal remarks. Yet we cannot doubt that the course which he pursued was in agreement with his settled convictions of duty, and probably commended itself to the better judgment of those even who may have been at times disposed to find fault with him.

The purity of his motives in all that he did or forebore to do, his people never questioned. And there were among them those who revered him in their hearts, although his holy life they had no disposition to imitate ; his "hard doctrines" they had no wish to believe.

His visits among his own people and his journeys abroad were not time thrown away, but were improved to great advantage. It could not be otherwise with one so willing and so "apt to teach." He acted upon the principle to be always and everywhere the *minister*, and in all situations and circumstances, in his *own* parlor, or in others ; by the wayside or at the watering places, or on ship-board, as well as in the pulpit, he never seemed to *forget* that he was one. Whether among strangers or acquaintances, they witnessed the fact, and gave him reverence. He was social, courteous and pleasing in his manners, yet he maintained in a very marked degree the dignity of his office, blending with the humility of a servant of Christ, the urbanity of a perfect gentleman.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### HIS VOYAGE TO CHARLESTON, S. C.

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"Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathom'd caves of Ocean bear."—

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So sang the bard in strains of beauty rare,  
And wrote his name in sparkling radiance there. —  
Yet richer gems than orient pearl or gold,  
Of brilliant beauty and ethereal mould,  
Float with yon ship upon the sea-green waves,  
Than those which sleep, low in their ocean caves.  
While from the bounding crest, or distant lea,  
Breaks the glad sound, "Sailor, there's hope for thee."

It was in the summer of 1817, that Dr. Payson embarked on board the ship *Liverpool*, T. McL. master, bound for Charleston, S. C. for the improvement of his health.

A recent interview with the respected, and now venerable shipmaster, will furnish a few incidents of Dr. Payson, during the voyage.

The captain was gentlemanly in his manners, and benevolent in his feelings, and one of Dr. Payson's hearers. He gave his minister an invitation to take a passage on board of his ship.

The views which this shipmaster had entertained of Dr. Payson, he not having had a very intimate acquaintance.

with him, were probably, like those which have been commonly entertained by strangers, at variance with the truth.

He had probably supposed him to be gloomy and unsocial in spirit, and of course had anticipated but little pleasure in the society of his passenger.

Capt. McL. however was greatly and most agreeably disappointed, as all have been who have entertained similar views.

On shipboard the minister mingled freely with the crew, and became an instructive and entertaining companion ; yet he was eyed probably by them, at first, as a Jonah, or something worse, whom, it is not unlikely, they wished in their hearts to see overboard, or at least that he might stow himself away in some snug corner out of their sight, that they might escape the silent, yet withering rebuke of his eye, or the reproof, which they knew in their consciences they would deserve, and which they might expect from a precise and puritanical parson. They felt that he was in their way, and that the oaths which they were wont to throw out upon a gale of wind, must be fewer and softer, and farther between, than would suit their usual practise.

His knowledge of human kind, and his large amount of practical wisdom ; his peculiar tact, together with his unbounded desire to lay himself out to do good to all, might be said to constitute his " stores," which he knew would be in requisition, and which he intended should be turned to good account in his new situation. And it is easy to conceive how a familiar word, now and then a pleasant, intelligent smile, or a benevolent look, would soon cause the stiffened muscles of those hardy faces to relax ; and perhaps a pull at the ropes, or a heave at the windlass,



or a "turn" at the helm, now and then, would remove all their prejudices, and cause them to look him and their messmates in the face with perfect good nature. The sailor is easily won, nor does the tarpaulin necessarily cover a brainless head ; and a warmer heart than his beats in no bosom.

If at the orders of the superior officer, they had assembled in the cabin for prayers, somewhat unwillingly, they became gradually less reluctant, until they think of the new order of things with a degree of pleasure, and are ready to obey the summons to prayers, as they would to a season of their wonted conviviality. All who are acquainted with the remarkable facility with which Dr. Payson could suit himself to every possible emergency, may judge what kind of prayers, both in appropriateness, and fervency, and variety, were offered up in that ship's cabin, as she bounded upon the mountain billow of the storm, or glided in her stateliness before the gentle breeze.

We may judge too, of the salutary influence of such exercises, upon all on board.

Capt. M. informed us, that morning and evening prayers were observed during the whole passage out, as also a regular religious service on the sabbath, and that there was no profane language used among his men while Dr. Payson was on board, nor after he left, during the whole voyage to Europe.

Thus by his consistent example, and seasonable remarks, he made, and *left* an impression upon the minds of this ship's company, which was probably never effaced.

As it regards the shipmaster himself, now a member of Dr. Carruthers church, we are authorized to state that the religious impressions which he received from Dr. Payson

during his residence on board, never left him, and that the hope of salvation he now indulges, was, in part at least, the fruit of that "good seed of the kingdom," which fell upon his conscience during the acquaintance which he formed with Dr. Payson, on that eventful passage. Truly that was a "saving voyage," in a very important sense.

Dr. Payson, during a storm of thunder, and lightning, and rain, which they experienced while off the "Capes," went on deck to enjoy the scene, and remained there during the whole of this war of the elements; not as Dr. Franklin would, to experiment upon electricity, but to enjoy the sublimity of a thunder tempest upon the sea as he had been wont to do upon the land, and in imagination, like the imprisoned eagle,

"Rising through tempest-shrouded air,  
All thick and dark, with wild winds swelling;  
To brave the lurid lightnings glare,  
And talk with thunders in their dwelling."

While others might shrink and tremble when exposed to the terrific scene, he could sing, conscious of his safety under the divine protection;

"This awful God, is ours,  
Our Father, and our love."——

Capt. McL. generously offered Dr. P. a passage to Europe, which invitation however, circumstances compelled him to decline.

We can imagine, how afterwards, as this ship's commander and crew, entered the cabin or walked the deck, they were reminded of the religious services they had enjoyed on board, and the instructions of that man of God;—or as they sailed upon life's broader and more

hazardous ocean, how memory would revert to some useful hint which had fallen from his lips, whereby they would be led to consult with deeper interest, the grand moral chart which God had furnishd them in his word, for their guidance among the shoals and quicksands of their passage.

Mr. B., a member of Dr. Payson's church, who accompanied him on this voyage, has favored us with a few particulars respecting the return passage. After remaining a short time in Charleston, they embarked on board a vessel bound for Boston. They were twenty days on their passage.

"On board of this vessel," says Mr. B., "there were two or three of the hands who were, at first, wild and reckless, and who seemed much annoyed at the presence of their minister passenger. Soon, however, they became very civil, and continued so during the remainder of the passage; and assembled with others of the crew, in the cabin, for religious services, both on week days, and the Sabbath. Before they arrived in Boston, all on board became exceedingly attached to Dr. Payson, and much interested in his remarks.

After their arrival, and when about to disembark, Dr. Payson and Mr. B. were urged to come on board the next day, that they might hold a religious meeting, with which request they very willingly complied.

What a charm and power must there have been in Dr. Payson's conversation, what an influence in his presence and example, which could have so won upon the hearts of these sons of the ocean. He "cast his bread upon the waters," and eternity, only, can reveal the favorable results of this voyage. Nor would it be uninteresting to

ascertain the course which those who composed this little congregation on ship-board, afterwards steered ; whether they have found the port of endless life, or, if yet tossed upon the billows, they are "heading" towards it, and will one day "cast anchor within the vail."

Doubtless, the incidents of that voyage, furnished them with a subject of interesting remark ; a serious strand to twist with their "yarns," with which, years afterwards, they would beguile many a conversation, serious or otherwise, with their companions in the fore-castle ; or with landsmen at home. Or, what is still better, it may be hoped that those instructions were deeply engraven upon their hearts.

"This voyage," remarks Mr. B., "was of essential benefit to Dr. P., he having arisen thereby from a low prostration of spirits, and indisposition of body, to renewed health and vigor.



## CHAPTER XXII.

His conversations always in keeping with occasions—A marriage ceremony—showing his precedence, and propriety of speech and behavior—His sister's death announced to him—His remarks on hearing the intelligence.

His conversation was always in keeping with the occasion, especially when performing his parochial visits. His heart was in his work, and his work was to win souls.

Of this grand object of his pulpit labors, he did not lose sight when the Sabbath ended. He taught them publicly, and from house to house; yet his zeal and piety never became overheated, nor was it injudiciously applied. "He kept the even tenor of his way."

Nor could his piety be hid, though not obtrusive. Its peculiar savor was apparent, yet delicately diffused over all his actions. It consisted not in a sudden outburst of uncouth expressions, or abrupt inquiries respecting our spiritual condition when he met us, as though he would say, I am a minister, and you must listen to what I have to say and just as I please to say it. He manifested no acrimony of spirit; on the contrary, an inexpressibly tender and affectionate manner pervaded all his inquiries into your spiritual welfare. In his reproofs, he did not fly into your face like the vengeful wasp, merely to sting you that you might feel his power,—his rebukes

were kind and gentle, yet would surely be felt by the self-accusing conscience of the delinquent.

The practice adopted by some ministers, of going from house to house, and of introducing themselves and their subject in a manner almost partaking of rudeness, and with an air that seems akin to a demanding of the privilege of praying with the family, whether they desire it or not, perhaps to their annoyance, by interrupting domestice duties ; although it may occasionally be attended with some advantage, yet, we believe, is often injudicious.

A minister who should sweep through his allotted field, doing up his work, as it were, " by the *job* ;" and who, in his calls, pays no respect to character or circumstances ; regardless of the manner in which different individuals are to be approached, must be very unmindful of the remark, that " there is a time and season for all things."

#### MARRIAGE CEREMONY.—AN INCIDENT.

Dr. Payson always appeared in character, wherever he was, and on whatever occasion. In the desk, or at the conference meeting ; at the social gathering, or at the house of mourning ; on the fishing excursion, or at the marriage festival ; his manner was remarkably appropriate to the circumstances.

Among his people, it would have been considered as anti-orthodox, to have any one else to tie the nuptial knot. The happy pair with all their fond anticipations of their contemplated union, could not have foregone the privilege of having him present, or scarcely have thought themselves married, *bona fide*, unless their beloved pastor had performed the ceremony. His presence graced

almost every meeting, at which it was suitable for him to be ; and none more than this, to which we allude. And with all our strong attachments to his person, it is no wonder, that, among the group that had assembled, he should be considered as the principal figure, and his presence almost indispensable. As we said, he always brought with him just the feelings and spirit which the speciality of the occasion demanded. Jesus at the grave of Lazarus, was Jesus at the "marriage of Cana, in Gallilee ;" on the Mount of Olives, pronouncing the beatitudes, or uttering his parables of wisdom by the way-side. So, Dr. P. observed times and seasons, with much propriety, and suited his remarks and general demeanor, most appropriately to the various circumstances in which he happened to be placed. He was cheerful without levity.

It was during the early part of his ministry, that the writer was present where Dr. P. was called to solemnize a marriage. It was in a family where he often visited. Among the guests on the occasion, were several who had seldom heard Dr. P. preach ; whose religious sentiments were at variance with his, and who made no pretensions to spiritual religion. The good lady of the house being desirous that the occasion might be improved for the special benefit of the individuals just alluded to, proposed promptly to Dr. P. that he should give a religious exhortation to the company. Dr. P. saw in a moment the impropriety of a measure, forbidden, as he thought, by the peculiarity of the occasion. He declined, as any wise and judicious minister would have done. — His zeal never outran his judgment. His perception of propriety was delicate and discriminating. A man of

less discernment, a fanatic, in his blind zeal, would not have perceived the incongruity of such a measure, would have ventured, and stumbled and probably defeated the design which his benevolence had prompted. Although religion, properly speaking, can never be out of season, either as respects time or place, yet we are commanded not to "cast our pearls before swine," by an injudicious or unseemly exhibition of the truth. There is a time to keep silence, and religion may be seen in its purest spirit, rejoicing with them that rejoice, as well as in "weeping with those who weep." Dr. Payson saw that at a marriage festival, sermon or exhortation to repentance would be unseasonable.

That Dr. Payson possessed strong natural sympathies is evident from the whole tenor of his intercourse with his flock. It has been recorded of him that he did not retire to rest during the whole night after he had received intelligence of a beloved brother's death. That event however, took place when he was comparatively young, and before he had enjoyed the special hopes of the gospel.

Yet many years afterwards, when we communicated to him the tidings of a beloved sister's death, (Mrs. R.,) he remarked, "I cannot mourn when a christian dies." This remark proved only how strong his faith was in eternal things, and his sense of the infinitely happier state of the christian after death. This sister he most affectionately loved, but he believed that for her "to die was gain," and he could not sincerely mourn that she had gone before him to her everlasting reward.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

The different methods he adopted to advance the spiritual interests of his church — His visit to the house of mourning — Happy results, as seen in an instance related by a correspondent — Reference to devotional habits in his family — The congregation once called to rise — The scene described — D. P.'s disappointment — Yet results finally in a revival of religion — Interesting scene at a prayer-meeting of the young men of his church — The character of the society described — His meeting at his own house for young men.

His visits, as might be expected, seldom partook of any other character than that of strictly pastoral visits, the grand object of which was to engage in spiritual conversation. So entirely confined were his remarks to religious subjects, that when he called upon his people they were prepared for such remarks, and expected nothing else. These visits were profitable in the highest degree. They afforded, also, to the pastor an opportunity to become acquainted with the spiritual condition of his people ; and their various circumstances, whether of backsliding or desertion, temptation, affliction, or rejoicing, furnished him with suitable texts and subjects for preaching ; a help which we see not how any minister can dispense with.

At one period of his ministry, he adopted the plan of visiting different families of the parish, (not always church-members,) early in the morning, that he might

have an opportunity to converse with them before they should be dispersed to their different departments of labor. We have never heard that he met with any opposition from the families he thus visited, while pursuing this labor of love ; which doubtless contributed much to the spiritual welfare of his flock.

It would be interesting to the christian community to know more of Dr. Payson in his family — more of his domestic habits, and the method he employed in training his children. Were we competent to the preparation of such a chapter, and had we the necessary materials, yet from delicacy we should judge such a course an unwarrantable intrusion into the sacredness of the domestic circle. Yet we may safely say, that in the endeared relations of husband and father and master, he was all that could be desired in fidelity, christian consistency and affection.

A female domestic, who for several years resided in his family, remarked recently, that Dr. P. was in the habit of praying with his children separately, and that she was permitted to enjoy the same privilege. He would say to them, “it seems as if my arms would break in bearing you up in prayer, but I shall not cease to pray for you until you are converted.”

So disposed was he to acknowledge God in all his ways ; so alive to a sense of dependence upon God for everything, that when he removed to a dwelling which he was to occupy, he solemnly dedicated it to God. He aided others, also, in a work of a similar kind, by being present on such occasions. Truly, he went in and out before them as a man of God, carrying religion in its heavenly spirit into their families ; exhibiting in himself the savor of piety in all his words and transactions ; inscribing “ holi-

ness to the Lord as it were upon the bells of the horses."

Besides family prayer, morning and evening, he sometimes appointed a meeting for special prayer at his own house, which many of his people attended. This was usually held in the forenoon, perhaps from 11 to 1 o'clock. Here they might meet their beloved pastor, to join in religious conversation and devotional exercises. We can conceive how such occasions would gladden his heart, as they led to a more endeared intimacy between the pastor and flock, and which proved a precious morsel to invigorate the spiritual health and strength of all who were present. His own feelings on this subject may be learned from a remark that he made in giving an account of such a meeting: "My people," said he, "attend the conference meeting as usual, and then come here for religious blessings, *hungry as ever*." The religion, both of pastor and people was not a *Sunday* religion merely, but an *every-day* religion. Spiritual influences enjoyed by his people were comparable to the gentle rain constantly distilling; the "small rain" of God's mercy rather than the "great rain of His strength." On sabbath morning, just before the time of divine service, he would call his family together and offer prayer for a blessing upon the worship of God's house, and that they might be the better prepared to engage in its solemn duties. A man of prayer indeed! Would it not be strange if the labors of such a man were not blessed?

At the bedside of the dying, on funeral occasions, and in his visits to the dwellings of his bereaved flock, he was wont to pour out his tenderest sympathies and consolations. The presentation of the "powers of the world to come," as uttered from his lips, was made to assume a reality, which bore with surpassing effect upon the

scenes of the sick chamber. The worldling, who had forgotten that he was mortal, then feels that truth as he had never felt it before. "Without hope and without God in the world," became a fearful reality to the sinner's conscience, which Dr. Payson, by his kind, yet scorching remarks, had awakened. The sick or dying professor is comforted or searches diligently for his passport to eternity.

"Quite on the verge of Heaven,"

Are all the by-standers around the sick-bed of that departing saint, when the melting triumphant prayer of Payson goes up. We catch the inspiration of the scene and the accents of the dying believer, while he exclaims :

"The op'ning heavens around me shine,  
And Jesus whispers I am his "

Those who have been present on a funeral occasion where Dr. P. was the officiating clergyman, will not be likely ever to forget the solemnity of the scene. He seemed like an angel there to comfort the mourners. His very presence was a precious consolation. His prayers, so sympathising and so particular in commending the heart-stricken to God, seemed to give a "luxury to grief." Uttered in tones of deep commiseration, and clothed in such pertinent language, they made the mourning-chamber seem like the vestibule of heaven.

He was prompt in visiting the afflicted families of his people, which visits were not only blessed to the christian, but proved the means of awakening the impenitent. This is seen from the following extract :

Writes one who could testify to the value of such visits, "I remember as yesterday the hour when he (Dr. P.) called at my father's, after death had entered our fami-



ly circle and bereaved us of a beloved mother. We were all at home, and our pastor sat down with us, mingling his sympathies and prayers with ours under the sore affliction that had darkened our happy home. I sat near the door, hoping he might not single me out for personal remark. But just as he was leaving he came where sat, and put his hand quietly on my shoulder and said: "E——, you have talents and ought to consecrate them to God." I felt the pressure of that hand and the power of those words. I feel them still. When a few days after, I called to see him, he met me with the simple question, "well, E——, do you hope your mother's death may be sanctified to you?" The question was but the echo of my own feelings, and from that, without asking me another question, he went on and showed me my position; stated and answered my difficulties and objections with such accuracy that my heart seemed mirrored in his, and I felt what I have before expressed, that he had the power of reflecting the image so truly that you could not fail to discover your own likeness. E. F. C.

Dr. Cummings, in his Memoir of Dr. P., mentions the various methods which he took to awaken his hearers to a deeper sense of the importance of religion, introduces a letter of Dr. Payson's, giving an account of a plan he devised for that purpose. A more particular description of the transaction alluded to, has been furnished us by a brother in the ministry, who well remembers it. Our correspondent relates the scene as he had it written in his journal.

#### THE CONGREGATION CALLED TO ARISE.

It was on Monday, Jan. 30, 1815, that the event was recorded by the brother.

“Something unusual occurred yesterday, in our congregation. Mr. Payson discoursed in the afternoon concerning future punishment, from a written sermon. The first part, only, he delivered, and then laying aside his manuscript, and filled with fervor, he spoke extemporaneously, and earnestly exhorted all to “flee from the wrath to come,” and not to be ashamed to appear to others to care for their own souls; and after he had begged pardon for what he should do, he said that on that week there would be a fast; and he gave an invitation to all to unite with the communicants, to give up their common business for one day for humiliation and prayer. God might meet them there. That he might know their minds, he requested all who would attend the meeting to rise. Many rose; not all; (Dr. Payson’s letter says about one third.) “Good God!” exclaimed the preacher, “are there so few that know the worth of their souls, and desire its salvation?” Mr. Payson was encouraged to appoint the meeting in the meeting-house instead of the conference-room, but so few attended in the forenoon that the meeting in the afternoon was held as were church fasts generally, in the conference room.

Dr. Payson, in the letter referred to, describes his own views and feelings on this occasion, in his own characteristic manner. “The church, to whom the measure was altogether unexpected, were almost overwhelmed with various emotions, and scarcely knew whether to be glad or sorry, to hope or fear. You may well suppose that the interval between the Sabbath and the Fast, was a trying season to me. I felt that I had completely committed myself; that my all was at stake. I should not have taken such a step, had I not believed I had sufficient reason for trusting that God would bear me out in it. I

expected severe trials, but had few fears of the event. The trials came, but they did not come in the way that I expected. The day of the Fast was the most dreadful day of my life.”\*

Those who were present at that meeting, will remember one circumstance, which was perhaps the principal one that occasioned our pastor's severe mortification. We remember very distinctly, that it produced a great agitation in our own minds. A scene was presented, bordering too much on the ludicrous, to be inserted here. But He who heareth prayer, and easily interprets the motives and desires of his people, did not eventually disappoint the expectations of the pastor, but it was made out fully to his satisfaction, that the appointed meeting, with all its accompanying infelicity, was followed with a blessing indeed, as appears from what the brother above mentioned, adds.

“For at this time a special interest in religion was awakened. A number of young men, who met weekly to converse on a chapter of the bible, spent the evening in prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit.

Dr. Payson having expressed his expectation that some conversions in his congregation would take place, individuals were excited to pray much for such an event, nor to cease from praying until they should receive an answer. It further appears from Dr. Payson's account of it, that the event very much encouraged him; “there being seventy inquirers, of whom fifty might be expected to join the church.” “Christ goeth forth conquering and to conquer.” That Dr. Payson, especially, and others, may have sometimes done what would be regarded as com-

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\*Payson's Memoir.

mitting themselves unwarrantably, in expressing their expectations of an immediate revival, which did not always occur, yet in this instance, and in others, there was a realization of this good man's expectations, and an answer to the "prayer of faith."

How long this desirable state of things continued, we are not able to say; but in proof that Dr. Payson had a people of persevering prayer, who could not rest easy under any long protracted suspension of divine influences, we copy the following extracts from the record of the brother before mentioned.

Limerick, Feb. 2, 1852.

"I remember with much interest the meetings of young men connected with Dr. Payson's church, held on sabbath evenings. They were pleasant and profitable to me.

Under date of December 18th, 1815, (this will be perceived, was in the same year of the scenes just related,) I wrote in my journal: "Last Sabbath, I met as usual, with our Society of Young Men." He mentions the place of meeting, the members present on the occasion, (all of whom but the narrator, and perhaps three or four others we think are still living.) "The time was devoted to prayer for a revival among us, when brother ——— arose to close the meeting. After praying for some minutes with much fervor, and while contemplating the greatness and glory of God, he suddenly ceased speaking. We all rose from our knees, and those who were nearest to the brother thus affected, took hold of him to support him, as he appeared to be fainting. He however, waived the assistance offered him. We all knelt down again, and he proceeded with great solemnity, expressing himself in a manner which showed a full assurance that it



was an exhibition of the glory of God which filled the room, and impressed us with such deep solemnity. Another brother then led in prayer with unusual warmth and importunity.

What excited us to such an urgency in our supplications, was the strong hope we entertained of a revival; several of the church being awakened from a lethargic state, and there being some instances of inquiry among the congregation."

The meeting here so feelingly described by our brother, we well remember, having been present on the occasion.

The "Young Men's Association" here spoken of, is worthy of mention, as it affords another instance of the influence which Dr. Payson's piety had among his people, especially the younger members of his church, and as it may perpetuate the memory of the institution itself, for the gratification of the surviving members. It is matter of grateful mention, that a christian benevolence on a more extended scale, seems now to be actuating the young men of our churches, in forming associations for mutual religious improvement, in some of our large cities, which, if properly managed, can hardly be too highly appreciated. The society of which we have just spoken, was composed of young men, members of Dr. Payson's church, of very respectable standing in the community, who met usually on sabbath evenings, to engage in prayer, and to converse upon religious subjects, and especially upon the services of the sabbath. The brethren brought warm hearts to these meetings, still under the influence of the truth they had heard in God's sanctuary. They were seasons never to be forgotten by us.

Another object at these meetings, which we viewed as an essential concomitant of our prayers, was to contribute liberally to the relief of indigent ministers of the gospel, and young men who were preparing for the ministry. It was a *young men's society then* ; but what have flying years effected ? Some of its members have found their rest in heaven : others, as they meet, will see the bloom of youth exchanged for the tell-tale wrinkle of age, and for raven locks, gray hairs ; and when in the presence of those of the third generation, we should refer to ourselves as members of "the *Young Men's Society*," our "*grand children*" look up and smile.

No man was more ingenious than Dr. Payson, in expedients to awaken the impenitent of his congregation, or to keep alive the religious fervor of his church. How solicitous to improve every occasion that offered, to drop some word of alarm to the careless sinner, and that always in the most judicious and affecting manner. It would seem that the "blood of souls" would never be found upon his garments.

There is probably no compunction of a keener or more distressing character, that visits the breast of a good man, especially a minister, than a consciousness of delinquency, for having failed to improve some fit season of giving reproof, to a sinner unprepared for eternity, especially if the opportunity has passed away forever. If there can be regret in heaven among the redeemed, perhaps there is no reminiscence of his life on earth, that will more surely produce it. It is not improbable, notwithstanding Dr. Payson's fidelity to his people, that he was often overwhelmed with a sense of his delinquency in this matter.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Charge of idolatry in Dr. Payson's people—His uncommon piety and talent combined, constituted the basis of his extraordinary eminence—Our deep feelings of reverence for him—Illustrations—The warm admiration for him universal among his people—No room for envy or jealousy on the part of his successors—Our opinion of him unchanged, after the lapse of twenty years—A lady's visit to him in his last sickness.

We often hear the charge, that Dr. Payson was the idol of his people. We repudiate such a charge entirely, if the term is to be understood in its more literal or primitive signification. As such, the charge would be undeserving of notice; yet, in a more popular, and less restricted sense, the fact may be admitted. His superior mental qualities could not fail to excite our admiration,—and for his exalted piety, who could help loving him. Such expressions of our affection and admiration, we judged to be in accordance with the noblest feelings of our nature, and with the Word of God, itself.

Mental or moral qualities, where they are possessed by any one, in only an ordinary degree, usually attract little notice. The absence of goodness, in an individual, though possessed of "talents angel bright," leaves him only to be *admired*, not *loved*. It was the *union* of the best qualities of the head, and of the heart, that awakened in the minds of Dr. Payson's people, such high estima-

tion of his character. On their part, it was the tribute of the understanding to superior excellence; the homage of the heart to extraordinary piety; an offering which they could not withhold, if they would. Such an expression of feelings was only in obedience to the Apostle's injunction, "to esteem those who labor among you very highly in love for their work's sake;" an injunction not easily or often over-observed. It was a command to which Dr. Payson's people were disposed "to make full proof" of obedience, by every demonstration in their power. We think they incurred no blame in so doing.

Should it still be averred that theirs was an undue admiration, let the fault be attributable rather to the frailty than to the depravity of our nature.

If it were wrong, at least let us plead some palliation of our sin in adopting that beautiful sentiment, dissociated from its gifted, yet unenvied author, though partaking more of the poetry than of the truth of theology—"The accusing spirit fled to heaven's high chancery, blushed as he gave it in; the recording angel dropped a tear upon the word, and blotted it out forever."

Yet it was God's image which we beheld and loved, as reflected from that piece of clay. Why should we be condemned for our admiration of what is grand and beautiful in a specimen of the moral and intellectual in the divine workmanship, when we are allowed to view with enthusiasm, the richness and magnificence displayed in the natural world;—the gem that sparkles in the hand of the artist; the rainbow that spans the heavens in its beauty, or the lightning that flashes from the summer cloud?

Man has not in himself, whereof to glory. "God



makes men great," Dr. Erskine remarks, by bestowing on them their distinguished genius and talents. Some of the courtiers of the Emperor Sigismund, who had no taste for learning, inquired why he so honored and respected men of low birth, on account of their science. The Emperor replied, "In one day I can confer knighthood or nobility on *many*; in many years I cannot bestow genius on *one*. Wise and great men are created by God only: no advantage of education; no favorable combination of circumstances produce talents, where the Father of Spirits dropped not the seeds of them, in the souls which He made."

God makes man great, and who shall undervalue the workmanship of his hands. If, in rendering our estimate of Dr. P. we do but exalt the wisdom and grace of the great Architect of the structure we are contemplating, where is room for envy, or for the charge of creature idolatry. Our remarks generally, in this biography, may, by some, be supposed to partake more of highly colored eulogium, than a sober impartiality allows: it is a criticism which we are anticipating; however, unfounded it may be in truth. It would be difficult for any one of ordinary christian susceptibilities, to have known Dr. Payson, as we knew him, and not to have felt the enthusiasm of which we speak. Nor should it be deemed reprehensible, when it is considered that our high regard for him, was productive only of good; for the truth fell upon our hearts with augmented power, in consequence. We were not led by our strong attachment to the man, to any alienation from the Great Fountain of life, but we rather loved the Giver all the more, for his gift.

Says Charlotte Elizabeth, who was accused of an idolatrous affection towards a beloved friend: "after his

death, they told me I had made an idol of him. It was equally false and foolish. An idol is something that either usurps God's place, or withdraws our thoughts and devotions from him. The very reverse of this was the case. That was surely a profitable idol, which kept me always prayerful before God, watchful over myself, diligent in the discharge of duties, and in continual thanksgiving for the mercies I had received ! Do I repent loving him so well ? I wish it had been possible for me to have loved him better. These warm affections of the heart are among the sweetest relics of a lost Eden, and I would sooner tear up the flowers that God has left to smile in our daily path through a sin-blighted wilderness, than I would cease to cherish," &c.

Who has not seen that a pastor thus warmly loved, becomes a richer blessing to his flock thereby. A true minister says, "I must love my people, and they must love me, or all hope of a pleasant and profitable ministry must be abandoned." There seemed no abatement in this mutual love between Dr. Payson and his people, to the last.

When the apostle said "I ceased not to warn every man night and day *with tears*," the last word of the sentence tells the whole story : reveals the whole secret of his influence : it was his strong and undissembled affection for them.

This veneration and love for Dr. Payson, was awakened at the very commencement of his labors among us. We have in distinct remembrance, and as vivid and fresh as if it were but yesterday, the emotions of respect and veneration which swelled our bosom ; (emotions which we are not conscious that the presence of any other man ever inspired ;) as on one Sabbath, soon after he came

to Portland, we were returning from divine services, and walked the street together. We kept at a respectful distance, eyeing him askance, our heart bowing down in its sincerest acknowledgments, and earnestly desiring to reveal to him, the secrets that labored in our youthful bosom. We wished to tell him how the heart had been taken captive by his thrilling appeals, and powerful illustrations; while from him, a side-long glance, perhaps read our inward struggles and aspirations and seemed to say "My young friend, with what freedom mayest thou tell me all thy heart: with what gladness would I attend to any question relating to thy spiritual interests." Not as yet having had a formal introduction to him, how highly did we anticipate such a privilege. Not that we expected "virtue to go out from him," merely from "touching the hem of his garment;" nothing of that: yet was there an irrepressible desire to come in close companionship with one who seemed to us at the time, somewhat akin to an angel.

We are not unaware of the reality and strength of similar attachments, which obtain generally in the time "of the first love," towards one who has been instrumental in leading the mind to the subject of the soul's salvation.

For ten or twenty years after our first acquaintance with him, his presence would inspire feelings as reverential and affectionate as it ever had done; it was not like the fervency of the first happy moments of our acquaintance, yet it was an enthusiasm sobered and tempered by frequent interviews, into a more moderate and permanent flame.\*

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\*In proof that an admiration similar to ours, towards distinguished individuals, has been felt, and publicly expressed by others, I quote the following. Says one, "We went up into his study,

Nor does there appear any abatement in the affectionate remembrance of Dr. Payson's old friends towards him, even to the present day. Let them meet any where, after ever so long an absence, and who will be more likely to claim their first attention as a subject of remark, than the man under whose ministry they once sat; or to what in the past will they be more likely to refer, than the precious seasons which Dr. Payson's ministry afforded.

Every heart dilates, every tongue is eloquent then. The scenes of ten or twenty years delightful spiritual privileges, pass before them in distinct review; and in imagination, they revel together, in those unforgotten spiritual feast-days. The aged matron is back in her youth-time again, and he of gray hairs, is heard to exclaim, with a heart in tears; "There was never another such a man as Dr. Payson, on earth."\*

It may be that we speak as barbarians to the young, and to those who have had no personal acquaintance with Dr. Payson. Time has in a measure healed the wound which death has inflicted, yet his mourning church can never lay aside their weeds.

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sometimes silent, sometimes conversing, as we felt ourselves inclined, or more properly, as he felt inclined; for during all the course of my long intimacy with him, my respectful attention never abated; and my wish to hear him, was such, that I constantly watched every dawning of communication from that great and illuminated mind."

\*A gentleman of great respectability, now resident at Boston, thus writes us. "Nothing concerning Dr. Payson can ever be uninteresting to me. I do most sincerely and heartily sympathise with you in your estimation of his character; and believe that we shall *"never look upon his like again."* I love to call up those bye-gone days; the memory of them is sweet, and often refreshing to my soul."

N. D.



The expression of these strong and tender susceptibilities of Dr. Payson's people towards him, ought then to be viewed with no emotions of envy, but the contrary. Viewed in its proper light, it will be seen, that the strong affection they manifested toward their pastor, guarantees to his successors, a similar affection. As in the conjugal relation, the frequent mention of a long cherished attachment of a husband towards the first beloved, instead of creating alarm in the bosom of her successor, should only strengthen her confidence in her husband; and that he who could love so ardently and tenderly the *first*, is capable of bestowing a suitable affection upon any other who may fill her place.

We introduce another reminiscence from our brother, on the subject of the affection of Dr. Payson's people towards him.

*May 5th, 1815.* "Mr. Payson sailed for Philadelphia for his health. A very favorable opportunity presented itself. The captain of the vessel is a man of sincere and ardent piety; he feels all the warmth of the christian's first love: has lately joined Dr. P.'s church: is resolved to preserve strict order on board, and to maintain prayer.

Mr. Payson has a strong hold on the affections of his people, and no flock ever loved their Pastor more than they do.

I walked on Munjoy's Hill, with one who wished to catch a last glimpse of the vessel, as she left our shores. He thought with pleasure, on the delightful duty of prayer, in which he supposed they were then engaged." While Dr. Payson's benevolence embraced the world, his affections specially centered on his church and congregation. This he expressed from the pulpit, and it greatly attracted their affections towards him."

C. F.

The lady, (now deceased,) who wrote the following lines, was an admirer, and constant hearer of Dr. Payson during nearly the whole of his ministry. The strength and fervency of her affection appears to the last. Just before his death, she visited him for the last time. It was an affecting scene; she returned home, and in endeavoring to give some relief to her feelings, penned the following lines. They are the language of deep feeling; we can almost see the falling tears, while in the depth and friendship of her grief, she pays this last tribute of her respect and affection to her dying Pastor.

We insert the lines, not for any intrinsic value there is in the poetry, but only as evincive of the strength of her affection for him, and her unfeigned sorrow in view of his approaching dissolution.

LINES ON VISITING DR. PAYSON, JUST BEFORE HIS DEATH,

BY ONE OF HIS HEARERS.

And is that heavenly, dying look,  
The last I, sir, must have from thee?  
O painful thought! O dreadful stroke!  
Surely it must not, cannot be.

And are those precious words, the last,  
I ever from those lips shall hear?  
Those lips which seem like Prophet's, touch'd  
With holy rapture, heavenly fire?

Although thy cup of bliss is full,  
And seems almost to overflow,  
Yet I, too selfish to rejoice,  
Am fill'd with grief and deepest woe.

The pious *stranger* weeps the loss  
Of eloquence inspir'd by Heaven;  
And can thy own bereaved flock,  
E'er cease to weep such blessings riven?

Ah no ! for we have seen thee weep  
Our frequent wand'rings from thy God ;  
Our sins depriv'd thine eyes of sleep,  
While thine entreaties we withstood.

Thou did'st like Jeremiah mourn  
The sins which thou could'st not restrain :  
We do lament, thou holy man,  
That thou for us did'st weep in vain.

But low before that throne of grace  
Where thou thy flock so oft had'st led ;  
Prostrate we will our sins confess,  
And seek the gracious Saviour's aid.

And when this life's eventful scenes,  
With all its joys and woes shall cease ;  
We'll meet thy much lov'd spirit there,  
In the blest worlds of joy and peace.

Portland, 1827.

We are happy to record, that the people who could love Dr. Payson so well while living, and so fondly cherish his memory afterwards, are not slow to appreciate the excellencies of those who have successively occupied his pulpit, and taught at their firesides.

We venture the remark, that no ministers in the land, at this moment, are more highly respected and loved, than the present gifted incumbents of the Congregational pulpits in Portland.

Yet we are not aware that in instituting comparisons between Dr. Payson and others, that we derogate from the character of any other man. No other minister is reduced in his intellectual or moral stature, by a comparison with Dr. Payson as a standard. Every man will still retain his own size. In public estimation, he will rise or sink, to his own proper level ; as there are mountains

upon the face of the globe which are truly deserving of our admiration, although there are others still more elevated than they. The Alleghanies, and Mt. Washington maintain their elevated grandeur, though Mt. Blanc and the Andes tower above them. The Danube and St. Lawrence will not cease to be accounted among the noble of rivers, because an Amazon, in its ampler length and breadth, rolls its mightier flood to the ocean.

Other ministers may not be like Dr. Payson in many respects, and perhaps it is best that they should not be. Others less gifted, or differently gifted, may in some cases be equally useful.

Many lights of signal brilliancy, both intellectual and spiritual, during the last fifty years, have been lighted up, burned on in their splendor, and gone down, undimmed. Great men have arisen in arts and in arms; in theology and general science, and literature, to whom, in person, while living, or to whose memory when dead, a becoming deference and respect has been shown, and no man thinks of protesting against such expressions of regard and admiration. Why should deserved respect be withheld from the memory of Payson? When such men are removed from the world, and such lights extinguished, as has been remarkably the case within the last year or two, both in the old world and the new, how fearful the chasm. And how noticeable, whenever some Colossus in literature or arms, has fallen. In reading the life of Dr. Samuel Johnson, we were struck with the following remarks of one of his admirers, (not Boswell,) respecting the decease of that great man.

“He has made a chasm, which not only nothing can fill up, but which nothing has a *tendency* to fill up. *Johnson is dead.*—Let us go to the next best: there is no-



body : no man *can be said to put you in mind of Johnson.*" How very striking the last clause of the sentence : "*no one to put you in mind*" of the man ; that is, of *just such a man* as he.

Inquire of any one of Dr. P.'s surviving church members, who retains a reputable standing in the christian community, if the remark respecting Dr. Johnson, just referred to, is not strikingly applicable to Dr. Payson ; and he will answer in the affirmative, by his speaking countenance, and in most significant tones, which tell you that the heart's prompting is in the reply.

In language almost similar to the opinion given of Johnson, writes one respecting Dr. P., "*I know not where to find a comparison, for I have never heard a preacher who reminded me of him ; not one, whom for a moment, I could listen to, and have brought back, the impression of the preacher of my childhood.*"

E. F. C.

## CHAPTER XXV.

Character of his Theology—Anecdote respecting the Taste and Exercise scheme—His Calvinism once challenged—Was his preaching sufficiently doctrinal—An incident—Remarks on doctrinal preaching—Free from all innovations in his Theology—Beautiful harmony between his preaching and practice—His strong confidence in God illustrated.

Dr. Payson's Theology was decidedly Calvinistic, tinged somewhat with a Hopkinsian hue.\*

His great attachment to the Bible, as affording the only sure foundation of true principles in Theology, led him to form his opinion by that infallible standard, rather than from the opinions of men. Spiritual experience was a great and effectual teacher with him, whereby he derived instruction, from a voice within, answering to a voice from above. His frailty taught him; his vileness taught him; his temptations, his conflicts, his defeats, all taught him, so that in the most important sense, he was a "scribe, well-instructed unto the kingdom of Heaven."

Much of his theology was acquired while passing

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\*He was once conversing with a minister, who held that our exercises of mind, were directly created by God's Spirit, and not the result of a permanent taste or principle in the soul; he said in support of the opposite opinion, "If you should throw a pumpkin to a dog, he might smell of it, perhaps bark at it, but a swine would eat it. In respect to the doctrines of taste and exercise, it will be seen that he favored the opinions of Edwards and Burton, rather than that of Emmons.

under the cloud ; while “ he dwelt in Meseck, and sojourned in the tents of Kedar.”

Christ was emphatically his great Teacher, and “ none teacheth like him.”

The extent and variety of his religious experience, comprised a volume, which on earth, he was compelled to read with sighs, and flowing tears, but in heaven he reviews it, by a light that makes all plain, which once seemed dark and intricate : Heaven interprets what here was shrouded in mystery. He has arisen above the dark cloud ; tinged with brightness, indeed, as he looked upon it here, but now, all bright and glorious.

The writings of men, singular for their knowledge in the things of God, such as Newton, and Brainerd, and Edwards, and Thomas-a-Kempis, were consulted much by him, which served as a key, or an exposition to his own deep, and distrusting experience. Matthew Henry was his favorite commentator : he used it in his study, and read from it at his family devotions.

From this brief enumeration of his favorite authors, may be learned, in some measure, the character of his theological views.

His Calvinism, however, was once called in question, by one of his hearers.

Dr. Payson had preached a sermon, in which this good brother thought there was presented an anti-calvinistic view of the subject, by which the brother was alarmed, lest his pastor had advanced sentiments, that led to arminianism.

Meeting his minister soon afterwards in the street, he hailed him, and rather abruptly inquired of him, “ when he was going to exchange with brother T.” The Rev. Mr. T. was a very good brother, of the Methodist con-

nexion, in town. At that time the Congregationalists and Methodists were not in the habit of exchanging pulpits, as they now do.

It has been objected to Dr. P.'s preaching, that it was not of a sufficiently *doctrinal character*: that particular points in theology, which are deemed cardinal in the Calvinistic system, were not sufficiently prominent in his discourses; especially the doctrine of Election. In looking over a Journal kept by the writer, during the first period of Dr. Payson's ministry, in which he had noted down his texts, there does not appear one, which would lead to a particular or exclusive discussion of this, so called, offensive doctrine; although in the sketches of those discourses, the doctrine is adverted to, and virtually, and unequivocally acknowledged. Indeed, that doctrine, and its kindred ones, are implied in all his sermons, written or extempore, published and unpublished; although he had adopted the principle of Mr. Newton, viz: that of diffusing these Bible doctrines through his discourses, as a lump of sugar in a cup of tea; the whole should taste of it, but it should not be found in a separate form.

Although he seldom employed the naked terms, and technicalities of theology in his sermons, yet they contained the spirit and marrow of all scriptural doctrines, and that to such a degree, that the wonder is, that his plainness and fidelity in this respect, had not offended, and driven away more from his congregation. No preacher was ever more pointed and uncompromising in this matter. For example, the doctrine of human depravity, native and entire, ran like a stream of lightning through his discourses, which were calculated to tear up everything in the sinner's heart by the roots; truths



which fell like "hot thunderbolts" among the congregation. The absolute dependence of the impenitent sinner, and of christians, upon the Divine Spirit; the consequent helpless and ruined state of man, by nature, and his being at the disposal of a righteous and sovereign God, for life or death, were doctrines he exhibited and enforced in no stinted measure, and with great pungency and boldness.

From the plans of his extempore discourses, which the compiler had noted down in his memorandum, at the time they were delivered, may be clearly seen implied, the sentiment that "God hath mercy on whom He will have mercy," which is in fact the doctrine of personal, eternal, and unconditional election.

There was nothing apparent in his preaching, that had a tendency to blind the minds of his hearers, as to what doctrines he believed himself, or what he would have them believe. The books which he read and recommended to his students, and his church, were such as Dr. Bellamy, and Pres. Edwards's writings, and others, of sound orthodox faith; which fully confirms our opinion of the soundness of his theological views.

Dr. Payson doubtless, had reasons of sufficient weight in his own mind, for adopting the course he did with regard to his manner of presenting the doctrine of Election to the people. He knew how often the doctrine had been unskilfully handled by preachers; how it had been perverted by the hearers, in many instances to antinomian abuse, by giving a false peace to the conscience of the impenitent. He was aware, too, probably, that the subjects of his sermons were already sufficiently offensive to the natural heart, without the introduction of any thing further, not absolutely essential, to render them more so.

His people never found fault with his method of exhibiting truth which he from the first, observed. They highly respected his opinions and judgment in this matter.

No man could be more guiltless of the charge of keeping back the truth, or of failing to declare the whole counsel of God. Here he acquitted himself like an apostle. In his preaching, he singled out, not persons, but characters. A sermon which he once preached from the text, "Thou art the man," will bear ample testimony to his faithfulness in giving to every one his portion in due season.

Those who had only *heard* of the character of Dr. Payson's preaching, or who had heard him preach but occasionally, were not qualified to judge respecting his general treatment of doctrinal subjects. To have listened to him during the course of ten years of consecutive sabbaths, would have given them a correct view of this subject. Those who "*would have it*" that Dr. P. was defective in the system of doctrines which he preached were generally unwilling to be convinced of their error. Hence it was that when some ministers, laboring under a wrong impression in this matter, were called to preach in his pulpit, they would be likely to introduce subjects of a special doctrinal character, supposing that that had not been faithfully exhibited to Dr. P.'s people. This, what his people would call an improper interference, always gave offence, because it seemed to imply an impeachment of the wisdom of their pastor's course. The offense given was not owing to their disbelief in these doctrines, or an unwillingness to hear them discussed, under suitable circumstances; this remark applies to the more enlightened portion of his church.

We have received a letter from a respected minister, who mentions a sermon that was once preached in Dr. P.'s pulpit, during his absence, on the subject of Election; and that Dr. P. himself, on hearing of it, was somewhat disturbed in his mind; not because of the doctrine itself, but for fear it might have been injudiciously handled, and thereby have proved an evil rather than a blessing.

We remember well, the occasion of which the brother speaks, the preacher and the sermon, the text and the divisions, which we noted down at the time, and which are now before us. It was a very plain, solemn and clear elucidation of the doctrine, calculated to injure no one. It was perfectly scriptural, and just such an exhibition of the naked truth as we believe Dr. P. himself, had he heard it, would have taken no exception to; at least to the sentiments, even if he had doubted the expediency of introducing it to his people. The text was, "The counsel of the LORD shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure." A noble text, and as true as the Book of God; embracing principles in which it seems to us, all who love God's character must rejoice.

The preacher was the Rev. Mr. G. of W., a very worthy, respectable and successful minister, now living. With our most hearty approbation of the wisdom of the course which Dr. P. pursued, among his people, under the circumstances in which he was placed, we cannot but commend the practice of those who, in their preaching, choose to adopt a different one from that of Dr. Payson. Some of our ablest divines, as it is well known, under whose ministrations great and precious revivals have been enjoyed, were not sparing in giving great prominence in their discourses, to these cardinal doctrines.—

God honored them and his servants who declared them. The doctrine of eternal, personal election to the unregenerate heart, is anything but soothing. It has perplexed and distressed many, who have been brought near enough to see it, and under an awakened conscience, to feel its truth bearing upon their own individual case.— They have been ready to “fly into the face of Jehovah,” for revealing such an unpalatable truth, yet who have afterwards, under a sweet submission to God’s sovereignty, instead of impeaching his wisdom, been willing to defend the ninth chapter of Romans, with “the last drop of their blood,” and to sit down calmly and with tears flowing from a melting heart, to adore the precious consolation and wisdom contained in it.

We cannot forbear relating, in this connection, an account given us by a good christian lady, of her troubles about this doctrine in her own experience, and her happy deliverance from them. The relation may prove serviceable to others in similar circumstances.

She had been deeply awakened to her situation as a sinner. She had arrived to that fearful spot in her history, to which so many come and then stop; from which many, alas! tired and exhausted in their struggle with the Divine sovereignty, sink into a state of despondency, or go back to their idols and their gods. The dark cloud of ignorance and pride, and unsubmitiveness rises up and obscures the wisdom and justice of Jehovah’s government, which shines forth in the Bible

“ ———With truth so bright,  
As dazzles and confounds the sight.”

Unwilling to submit to divine wisdom, or to “wait the great decisive day,” they must “cut the knot,” or declare the subject inexplicable. They, notwithstanding,



respect the doctrine, and dare not directly deny its truth. They feel the quarrel within, but they cannot—no, “they never can be reconciled to it.” If they could disbelieve it, they would ; but there it stands, written as with a sunbeam, “I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy.” Read—how it looks just like God : hearken—how it *speaks* just like God. And there is no evading its truth, or its import, or its justice. Angels, long before, beheld a similar inscription, upon the pillars of the Eternal Throne ; angels—the fallen and the kept, saw the truth of the inscription, by the one not to be disputed, as they learn their expulsion from heaven ; by the other to be humbly and thankfully acknowledged as they cry “Alleluia ! Just and righteous art Thou, Lord God Almighty”—dark, deep, inscrutable lines ! But all is right.

“Nor Gabriel asks the reason why,  
Nor God the reason gives ”

But this lady still went about, carrying the burden upon her heart.

We do not say she was not a christian during all this time ; she probably was. But the cloud was to pass away. Her anguished spirit was to be relieved. Led, doubtless, by the Holy Spirit, she fell upon her knees, and poured out her sorrows to her Heavenly Father, with the *very text* upon her lips which had proved a “stone of stumbling and rock of offense” for many weary days and nights. Even upon that very rock she knelt, and *turning the text, into a prayer*, I said, “Lord, it is written, ‘I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy ;’ Have mercy upon *me*.” Faith and submission ! what can ye not accomplish ! The cord was unloosed that she had been twisting up, in her unbelief and folly. From

that moment, all her doubts and troubles respecting the doctrine of the text, left her. Like Hannah, though before of a sorrowful spirit, she was comforted, "arose and went away, her countenance was no more sad." The web with which Satan had entangled her, as thousands have been, was broken. Defeated in his project by one stronger than he, and the captive is released; he darts back, like a spider, to his den, again to weave his web, and to await his opportunity to "beguile unstable souls."

As much as some of these good old-fashioned doctrines of the Bible at the present day are scorned, caricatured, disjointed and perverted, we love to defend and to preach them. We delight to hear them outspoken and free, from the pulpit, without disguise. Is there not reason to fear that the truth is suffering by concealment, and that we, at the present day who are called to preach plainly and directly these truths of God will have to suffer for our neglecting to do so, and that our people must suffer with us.

It does one's heart good to meet a judicious, godly layman; a worn-well and well-worn pilgrim, who will sit down and talk with us about those precious doctrines imbedded in the Assembly's Catechism, which he first learned from his sainted mother, and which have been his song in the house of his pilgrimage. Heart meets heart on such an occasion. Nor does the interview lessen in interest as the good *dame* of the household, who has all her life-time bowed with her husband at the family altar, with her countenance brightening by the reminiscences of other days, breaks in upon the conversation, "O yes, these blessed truths, which our good minister preached for half a century; precious bread of life, upon which we fed;

which we brought up our children upon, now thrifty and honoring well those doctrines by holy lives."

There is a golden chain here, inseparably linking these grand Bible truths together, and which are fastened to the pillars of God's throne. Our only secure hold for eternity is upon this chain. No spiritual christian, but has his grasp upon it, or at least it has upon *him*. Our good Methodist brother in the prayer he just offered, acknowledges these truths, in fact; peradventure his eyes may be holden, yet his heart is right, and under a sense of his dependence, upon sovereign grace, the language of his prayer reveals his belief.

Take these grand truths just alluded to, from the Bible, and what have you left? You disembowel it; you leave it without a frame-work for its support; without sinews or muscles. Look at it; a mutilated, nerveless, lifeless thing. Is that the Bible God gave to man? Is it that which Luther loved and defended? that which came in the May-flower, and which our pilgrim fathers opened and prayed, and wept over upon Plymouth Rock?—not it.

There was much variety in the subjects which Dr. Payson discussed in the pulpit. He seldom touched upon the prophetic parts of scripture, or on subjects mysterious and occult. The types and emblematical passages, though capable of affording instruction, he left for those who had leisure, or special taste, to pursue an investigation of them. He chose subjects which he deemed more profitable to his people, than an elaborate, perhaps fanciful interpretation of the "bells and pomegranates;" or "Nine and twenty knives;" a text once preached from, by a minister who would ~~not~~ be outdone in the selection of difficult texts. Dr. Payson was alive to all the hidden beauty and glory of God's revealed word, and was deep-

ly interested in its rich and inimitable imagery — he was most happy and successful in his manner of exhibiting and explaining bible truth ; yet his *forte* lay in stringent, and overwhelming appeals to the *conscience*. When he spake, “Sinners in Zion were afraid, and fearfulness surprised the hypocrite in heart.”

There was no parade of learning about his sermons. For fruit he gave not flowers ; nor for an egg, a scorpion, nor stone for bread, neither bones for meat. “Out of his treasure, he brought forth good things.” “So he fed his people according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.”

With the philosophising theories, substituted in more modern times, for the scriptural representation of regeneration ; and which rob the Holy Ghost of much of his divine prerogative in that great work, be sure, Dr. P. would have no sympathy ; nor with any supposed new discoveries in the mechanism or the operations of the mind ; a view that would render Regeneration an easier, or a different thing, from what the Bible, and the past experience of the pious in all ages, have represented it ; nor did he believe that a “turning from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and satan unto God,” can now be more easily achieved in consequence of having a clearer understanding of the nature of the human mind.

A sentinel, too discerning and faithful was he, to be hood-winked to such glaring errors, or not to lift the trump of alarm at their approach. And never, probably, was there greater need that the watchmen on Zion’s walls should be found on their knees ; when the “enemy is coming in like a flood,” lest, sooner than we expect, the truth will be realized, of our Savior’s remark, “Nev-



ertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth."

The religious principles which he professed to believe and to advocate, were not idle theories with him, but carried out into constant and unwavering practice. This agreement of his life with his preaching, was to be seen and acknowledged, even by his enemies; and no doubt many a conscience-stricken sinner, felt the withering rebuke of his consistent and holy life; which gave, perhaps more than the doctrines themselves, a reality and permanency to the truth he had heard. The doctrines he preached, found a counterpart in his own life and varied experience, in an uncommon degree: so that of none, could it be more truly said, that he was "thoroughly furnished, unto every good work." His life was a Commentary upon his preaching. Witness his *strong and unwavering trust in God*. He preached the doctrine to others; and was governed by its power. He believed that God would have a special care of him, and of all who trusted in Him.

"About the year 1814," writes one, "during the war with Great Britain, the British had taken Eastport and Castine; and some vessels of war, were off Portland harbor, and the people, were greatly alarmed. Many of the inhabitants moved their effects into the country. Dr. Payson then lived in a most exposed situation, by the water, and yet was unusually devoid of fear. Speaking on the subject, in some company, at the time, he observed that "if we knew that an excellent brother had command of the enemy's fleet, and had a right to do as he pleased, we should not feel any alarm, and if we believed that Christ was our Savior, and that He had the sover-

eign disposal of all things, we should feel safe. The enemy made no attack upon the place."

We recollect that Dr. P. about this time, preached to his people, from the text, Isaiah, 37: 33. "Therefore thus saith the Lord, concerning the king of Assyria, he shall not come into the city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord." It were not to exalt his piety or his faith, too much, to attribute the preservation of the place from the threatening foe, to the prayers of Dr. Payson, for "he was mighty with God, and prevailed." Many remarkable events during his ministry, were made the subject of his pulpit discourses, and turned to good account. He was always on the alert to make some good impression on the minds of his people, by appropriate notices and reflections upon God's providential dealings. His prayers, especially on such occasions, were such as to excite the admiration of all who listened to them.

He was not favorable to the declaration of the "war of 1812," yet it furnished him with opportunities for the exercise of his faith, and the development of his remarkable powers of mind. The prayer he offered at the interment of the officers of the Boxer and Enterprise, which has been mentioned, is spoken of with admiration, to this day. It was doubted by some at the time, whether he could have been willing to officiate, (peace man as was,) on that occasion. But where duty called, and an opportunity offered for usefulness, he knew nothing of war-measures or war-makers. The occasion commanded his attention, and his services. God might be honored, and souls saved, through his instrumentality. In

time of war or peace, in a season of stagnation of commerce, or the reverse, sick, or in health, he always found opportunity to do good. He sought opportunities. Not officious, or self-seeking, yet always prepared and ready, and equal to any occasion where his services were wanted. See him at the cell of the wretched prisoner, who was shortly to expiate his crimes under the hands of the executioner, with words of instruction upon his lips. See him visiting the sick and the wretched, everywhere; carrying out, and endorsing the principles during the week which he taught his people on the sabbath.

I took him with me, said a surgeon, to the compiler, to the room, to pray and converse with the poor wounded midshipman Waters, of the city of Washington, who was on board the Enterprise, in the engagement off Portland; the wound being such, that faint expectations were indulged respecting his recovery. Our informant repeated some of the prayer that Dr. Payson offered on the occasion, and the manner in which he prayed; it was so humble, sympathising, and appropriate to his condition, that the noble hearted youth, (and he was such, for we afterwards became acquainted with him,) was melted into tears. "You will call again sir, will you not," said the sufferer, so deeply impressed had he become with Dr. Payson's prayer and conversation. A monument, however, was soon to mark the spot of his sepulture, in the cemetery on Munjoy, near by which, stands the tomb of Payson.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Difference in religious opinions less a hindrance to ministerial exchanges now, than formerly—A word respecting different denominations—The white flag—Occasions in Dr Payson's ministry, which called for his conscientious straight-forwardness—Rev. Dr. Nichols' ordination—Mr. Payson's dissent from the opinions of the council—Mr. Willis' remarks on the subject—Mr. Willis' high eulogium on Dr. P.—His act of dismissing the people without the usual benediction explained and defended—Anecdote touching this subject, of the Rev. Mr. Flavel—His leaving the Conference room abruptly, noticed and explained—He did not possess an overbearing spirit.

The difference in religious views does not now, as in Dr. Payson's days, place so far asunder the friends of evangelical truth. The reformatory character of the present age renders it expedient for ministers of all denominations frequently to unite on public occasions to sustain the war against the common enemy. Nor can it be regretted that there is now a more cordial unanimity among the professors of spiritual christianity than formerly. The grounds of difference in opinion, especially in regard to doctrine, will doubtless continue to exist, and from the nature of the case always must, until in those matters the watchman are brought to "see eye to eye."

The Congregationalists cannot believe that their Methodist and Free-will brethren do quite come up to the standard of Orthodoxy. The Baptists agreeing with us on all



points, save one, have the same trouble with us, as we had with the first named orders; so they left us—not only for the *doctrine's* sake, but to enjoy what they supposed a more simple and spiritual mode of worship; an argument of some weight, taking into consideration the lukewarmness, if not error in doctrine, which prevailed in many of the Congregational churches of *that time*. It cannot be concealed that there was much sensitiveness on the part of the “standing order” of that day, when they found many of their people going over to other christian organizations, tacitly casting reproach, as it was then considered, upon the religion of our forefathers. Thereby, feelings, inimical to the peace of the general church were engendered; which in some cases led to unfriendly remarks, if not to open ruptures.

A compromise, however, has been effected, and the “white flag” is now seen going back and forth between these churches, while their several incumbents when in each others’ pulpit, understand that as a matter of ministerial etiquette and good faith, no sentiments are to be advanced, about which they conscientiously differ; and their judgment being like their watches, although none go just alike, yet each believes his own.

Dr. Payson’s *straight forwardness*, and decision of character,

“For this was all thy care,  
To stand approv’d of God, though worlds  
Judg’d thee perverse.”

MILTON.

In whatever related to his public ministry he manifested an amiable independence of mind and purity of conscience. He would not disdain a track, because the footprint of others was seen upon it, yet where the chier

responsibility of any particular course to be pursued rested upon himself, his appeal must be to a higher standard than man's.

It would be arrogance in Dr. Payson's friends to claim for him an entire freedom from error in faith or in conduct or to suppose that nothing he had done or said might not have been better left undone or unspoken. This granted we think we are justified in asserting that no particular course of a public nature, which he adopted, is deserving of rebuke, has left a stain upon his character or ministry.

There were emergencies in his life, in which an opportunity was afforded to test his moral courage, and fidelity, in defending what appeared to him, as the true Gospel of Christ. Nor was he actuated by a principle of bigotry, or blind zeal, but was governed by an unfaltering regard to his duty, as one "set for the defense of the Gospel."

His was a moral heroism of rare happening, deserving not rebuke, but rather the highest commendation. It did not result from nervousness, but arose from the deductions of a "sound mind," and we think, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; an influence which no man more highly valued or obeyed.

The course he pursued in what we are now about to relate, has by enemies and perhaps friends, been attributed to his "infirmities," or to bigotry, but it was not the result of either; not error in judgment even, nor nervous irritability, nor any unjustifiable motive, but a supreme and conscientious regard to truth and his ordination vows.

It is not from any wish on the part of the writer, in adverting to these transactions to awaken feelings that may

have long slept, touching the course which Dr. Payson took relative to the ordination of Dr. Nichols; but as Mr. Willis, in his history of Portland, has gone minutely into the subject, there can be no valid objection to a statement of the matter in the light in which Dr. Payson's friends have viewed and do still view it. We think justice requires that Dr. Payson's course in this matter should be so represented, that instead of being judged worthy of blame, he should be not only exonerated but commended for his conscientious and independent course. In a free country, like other men, he had a right to pursue the course he did in this matter, sustained as he felt himself to be by conscience and the word of God. In others, perhaps, of less tenderness of conscience, or having a different view of the subject, they might have led to a different course. He felt that to his own master he stood or fell.

Dr. Cummings in the "Mirror," has alluded to this affair, and has introduced extracts from Dr. Payson's letters which refer to it. We see in these extracts, the truly faithful, cross-bearing, conscientious minister, who would do right whatever might be the result; who could not do otherwise, without sacrificing principle, and thus proving recreant to his Master. But is it said his popularity or his usefulness was at stake, in this matter of non-compliance. So, we say, was the peace of his soul at stake. A compliance would have doubtless gained the favor of many; but he loved not the praise of men more than the praise of God, and the tones of that voice from a venerable father's lips, had scarcely ceased to vibrate upon his ear, which on his ordination day, said to him, "Lay hands suddenly on no man."

Dr. Payson was invited to sit with the council to or-

tain Rev. I. Nichols, a Unitarian minister, over the First Parish in Portland, as colleague with the Rev. Dr. Deane. He had reason to believe that the religious sentiments of Mr. Nichols, were antagonistic to his own, and that therefore, there could be no ministerial fellowship between them. Viewing this difference of sentiment as of paramount importance, he felt it his duty, when called upon to express his views, in council, with respect to ordaining the candidate, to vote against the ordination.

With very high respect for the Pastor and people of which we are now speaking, yet we conceive that the stand which Dr. P. took, was no more worthy of censure than were the successions from that church which afterwards took place, by several of its most respectable members, on account of its religious creed.

In the latter case, there was a disposition to withdraw from covenanted obligations, for conscience' sake : in the former it was a withholding of ministerial fellowship, from the same principles : a course which in both cases, must meet the approval of an enlightened and impartial judgment. We are happy in being able to quote Mr. Willis on the subject, for other reasons, than his candor and impartiality as a Historian.

“Mr. Payson,” remarks Mr. Willis, “refused to extend to Mr. Nichols the right hand of fellowship, for the examination of the candidate was not satisfactory to Mr. P., and with the different views of the parties, on the controverted points of Theology, which were then deemed so vital by Mr. Payson, it could not be satisfactory to him.”

“He therefore, alone, of all the members present, refused his approbation of the candidate, and declined any part in the ordination.”



"We believe," continues Mr. Willis, "he acted conscientiously, whatever may be thought of the wisdom or the charity of his conclusion." Further, Mr. W. adds, and with much candor, "the course taken by Mr. P. was an independent one, and required great firmness of mind to resist the pressure for conciliation, which generally prevailed, and to encounter the obloquy which his solitary opposition would necessarily bring upon him, in a case so clearly unexceptionable, in every point, except dogmatic theology." "But," continues the same writer, "that was a time when a sharp and severe controversy was commencing, and the passions of those entering into the contest, were highly excited. We trust that the spirit of the Great Teacher and Master is gaining the ascendancy." He concludes by a high eulogium upon Dr. Payson. "He became one of the most popular and effective preachers of the day. To a deep religious feeling, he added an ardent and excited imagination, which gave a wonderful power to his ministrations, and drew around him a larger congregation and church, than had ever been gathered in New England to the stated services of the Temple. The cold and hardened were aroused, the indifferent animated, and every one who listened to him was persuaded to be, if not altogether, at least almost a christian. He possessed a wonderful influence over the passions of men, which he swayed almost at will; and what is most singular, his own heart was suffering all the while from the most sad and fearful doubts and forebodings, as to his own spiritual condition."\*

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\* We believe that Mr Willis labors under a mistake here. As far as we can learn, Dr. P., though encompassed with infirmities, which he mourned over, together with a deep sense of his inbred corruptions, never gave up his hope of his interest in the everlasting and unchangeable covenant of Jehovah.

In connection with the same subject, we add a note from the Rev. Dr. Deane, senior pastor of the First church, to one of his deacons, and which Mr. Willis has inserted in his book, accompanied by his own remarks. It relates to Rev. John Codman, who had been supplying at the First Parish for a few sabbaths as a candidate, just before Mr. Nichols.

"Mr. Codman," writes Dr. Deane, "is greatly admired by many. He is orthodox and ingenious, and I think very generally admired." Says the historian, "It was voted not to call him. *Cause of rejection, was his religious tenets.*" Adds Mr. W., "the distinction was coming to be made between the two religious parties, which divide the congregational denomination. The old-fashioned Arminianism and liberal Calvinism were ripening into Unitarianism, and orthodoxy was taking a more decided and exclusive type, and standing distinctly and firmly upon its own peculiar platform. Mr. Payson had a large share in giving distinctness and severity to this line of separation." Thus far Mr. Willis is to be more highly appreciated.\*

The high compliment herein paid to Dr. Payson's character for preaching and talents and constienciousness is exceedingly gratifying to record; manifesting as it does, so entire an absence of narrow and partial feelings on the part of the writer.

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\*It is from no insidious, querulous or meddlesome spirit, that we refer to this ecclesiastical procedure, but for reasons which are akin to those which influenced the mind of the historian just referred to. It is with the most profound respect that we recognize in those persons who took a prominent part in the affairs of that religious society; men in the different professions, and of great worth; men who have filled some of the most honorable stations in the community, and whose names are associated with whatever is honorable and amiable in human character.

We admire, also, the accuracy and the candor which acknowledges and explains the difference between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism; and which thereby justifies Dr. Payson in drawing a line of demarcation so closely between these two systems, that must effectually counteract the opinion so frequently expressed, that there is *no essential difference* in the sentiments of the two sects.

In the above extract, a difference of opinion is explicitly avowed, and under the cover of this acknowledgment, we shall feel safe in maintaining our ground for consistency and truth, in always having declared this difference, and thereby defending our conduct, when we have "contended peaceably, yet earnestly, for what we believe to be the faith once delivered to the saints."

And with this public acknowledgment of the difference between us, we see not as they can be justly charged with bigotry and uncharitableness, who as ministers of the Trinitarian and Calvinistic faith, from conscientious motives, refuse fellowship with those, who by their own showing, view the doctrines of their opponents as absurd or blasphemous.

If this be a just conclusion, and this wide difference between the two parties does exist, then the censure under which Dr. Payson has been supposed to lie for refusing to lay hands of ordination upon the candidate, however talented and respected and amiable, as we acknowledge him to be, who preached, if not "another gospel," yet a very different one, is alike unjust and indefensible.

In the foregoing extracts, relating to Rev. Mr. Codman, a pretty full disclosure, we think, is therein made, respecting the religious tenets of the First Church; a large majority being opposed to hearing such doctrines as Rev. Mr. Codman preached.

That venerable and respectable church, like every other, had an unquestionable right to be governed in their election of a candidate, by a regard to his religious sentiments. The same privilege is all *we* ask. And if the Unitarian churches can have no fellowship with our peculiar doctrines, then according to the "golden rule," they will certainly allow us the same liberty.

The act of his once dismissing the congregation on communion-day, by pronouncing what may have been called the apostolic malediction, "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha," was considered by many, and even some of his best friends, as an injudicious step. It led to some unhappy results. Yet Dr. P. stated, publicly, we think that the act was not a hasty one; but that the subject had long been under consideration by him, and although the soundness of his judgment, in this case, may by some be called in question, yet we are not willing to consider it as an unjustifiable step.

The revelations of eternity may disclose some very important result that followed that procedure, which will entirely satisfy us, that the man of God, not only obeyed the dictates of a good conscience, but performed an act in accordance with the righteous purposes of God, which may have resulted in the salvation of some sinner. If so, how wrong to attribute this singular proceeding to nervous excitability, or any other equally improbable or ungenerous cause or motive.

The experiment, however, it may be remarked, he did not deem proper to repeat.

Probably the principle on which this transaction was based, was the conviction, that he "could not bless, whom



the Lord had not blessed," or pronounce a blessing upon those who were about to leave the Lord's table, in despite of the Savior's solemn command, "This do in remembrance of me."

To let the congregation, on sacramental occasions, retire without a formal dismissal, the course, I think, which he subsequently adopted, thus complying with Balak's directions to Balaam, "Neither bless them at all, nor curse them at all," may be considered as more advisable.

The fact that he never *repeated* the experiment, does not prove that he judged it wrong in the *first* trial. He might have considered that all his contemplated ends had been answered, and that a repetition was unnecessary.

Offence, however, was taken by a very few present, who from that time left the parish. This was to be regretted, as they were among those of the most respectable character.

Notwithstanding, their house of worship was crowded, large as it was, and such was the "rush" to enjoy the benefits of his preaching, that it had to be considerably enlarged. If this procedure were a fault in their minister, his people viewed it as a small thing, compared with the general excellencies of his character. They found no difficulty in casting the mantle of charity over it.

The following anecdote came to hand after the above remarks were penned.

The excellent John Flavel, minister of Dartmouth, Eng., once preached from these words; "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, &c." The discourse was unusually solemn, particularly the explanation of the curse. At the conclusion, when Mr. Flavel was about to pronounce the blessing, he paused and said, how shall I

blest this whole assembly, when every person in it, who loves not our Lord Jesus, is Anathema Maranatha. The solemnity of this address, deeply affected the audience. In the congregation, there was a lad, named JOHN SHORT, about 15 years of age, and a native of Dartmouth. Soon after, he went to sea, and sailed to America, where he passed the rest of his life. He lived till he was a "sinner, a hundred years old," and ready to "die accursed."

One day his memory fixed on Mr. Flavel's sermon. The earnestness of the minister, the truths spoken, the effect on the people, all came fresh to his mind. He felt that he had not loved the Lord Jesus; he feared the dreadful anathema, or curse; he was deeply convinced of sin, and was brought to the "blood of sprinkling." He lived, to give every evidence of being born again. Thus the truth lay in his heart, though forgotten, nearly an hundred years, and after that time, sprang up unto everlasting life.

And this same text, the utterance of which gave so much offence to some of Dr. Payson's hearers, and which was deemed injudicious at the time, by some of them; who knows but it may prove equally efficacious in the hands of the Spirit, though many years shall intervene, in bringing to the remembrance of some who were present on that occasion, the solemn transaction, and thus prove as an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty, in their case, as it proved to him that was converted, after the lapse of a hundred years.

And yet, in how many instances, does the faithful preacher become "a savor of death unto death." Of Dr. P. it might be said, as of his great Master, "He is set for the *fall*, as well as for the rising again, of many in Israel." This consideration often makes the heart of

the minister sad ; that his preaching will probably be the innocent occasion, of the aggravated ruin of some of his hearers. "Yet I must weep, where most I love." This consideration just spoken of doubtless operates as a motive with some, to absent themselves from the house of worship, that they might escape the truth, or the sore punishment of hearing and rejecting it. An occasional hearer at Dr. Payson's church, had become much awakened in his mind, who found he must either submit to the demands of God, repent, and lead a holy life, or attempt to drive off his convictions. There was no alternative, for peace had departed from him. He preferred the latter method. He left the meeting, and his convictions left *him*. Said he "*I made a desperate effort*" to shake off conviction, in which it is to be feared he too fatally succeeded. Such an act of desperate revenge upon the truth, and upon conscience, and God's Spirit, is doubtless often perpetrated : repaid too, with awful retributions, in this world and the next. Many would do well to remember Saul's fears and wretched end — as he exclaims — "The Philistines are upon me, and God has departed from me, and answereth me no more."

No one will accuse us of "setting down aught in malice, nor shall we in the following remarks give room for the charge of having "extenuated aught." The readers of the "Memoir," will remember an instance there recorded of Dr. P.'s once leaving the conference room somewhat abruptly. His course has been censured, as betraying an improper spirit. It has somewhat such an aspect, yet we think it is not to be remembered with feelings of unmitigated condemnation.

Who, that was acquainted with Dr. Payson's keen sense of christian duty and obligation ; the deep inter-

est he felt in the spiritual prosperity of his church ; and how jealous for the honor of God, can wonder, that witnessing the scanty number present, and their apparent apathy ; he himself, fresh from his closet with some important subject upon his mind to communicate for their benefit ; his anticipations of a good meeting, all suddenly destroyed ; I say, in view of all this, who can wonder much at his abrupt departure from the meeting. We say not that he was right in this matter. Yet may not his course be regarded as somewhat analogous to that of the Savior, when, on a certain occasion, he looked round upon them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts ; or that of Moses, when he descended from the mount and expressed his indignation towards those who, during his absence, had made a golden calf to worship.

Peradventure some worldly scheme of profit or pleasure had detained his flock from the place of prayer. In God's sight, and as his minister, and with the feelings of a man as well as a minister, combined, might he not be justified in this impressive and open rebuke. He did not stop at the meeting, to scold or to weep, as some would have done, but took, perhaps, a more effectual method, by silently withdrawing, and to his people, doubtless, it proved a more efficacious remedy for the evil than any that could have been adopted. If such were his aim, and they so understood it, the act must have been an arrow more sharply-pointed than any other which he could have prepared for their consciences.

He probably returned to his closet, to weep and to pray, as Moses did on one occasion and Elijah on another. The consciences of the delinquent members may have been awakened by this rebuke, and ultimate-



ly good might have been the result ; yet there might have been a mixture of sin and infirmity in the pastor as well as in the church.

Dr. Payson records the transaction in his diary ; for what special purpose it does not appear. This act of his has been set down to the account of "nervousness." We are willing that it should be thus accounted for, rather than that it should be attributed to sinful impatience.

It is said that the human stomach may become so inert that some extra-powerful stimulant is necessary to be given, to quicken its susceptibilities, before ordinary medicine will produce any effect. It is often that the diseased state of the soul requires some heavy judgment or some pointed rebuke, to quicken its dormant sensibilities before ordinary means will prove of any benefit.

Dr. P. may have been censured as manifesting an overbearing and domineering spirit among his brethren in the ministry, and over his own church. These surmisings must have been the fruit of malice or envy, and deserve an unqualified condemnation. As a regularly ordained pastor, he contended, or asked, only for the prerogatives of his office, as recognized by the ancient congregational platform, and as in accordance with apostolic directions. As it respected himself, in his private capacity, he cared nothing for precedence or power. He claimed only that which the Bible and his office awarded him.

He possessed a remarkably forbearing and receding spirit, yet he saw that the peace and prosperity, yea the very existence of the church, required that the *office* of the pastor be respected, and its rights maintained ; an office appointed by divine wisdom for the good of the church, its incumbents being made "overseers by the Holy Ghost." He modestly claimed the respect of the

office, when acting as Christ's authorized servant. "Christ gave some—pastors and teachers;" and his authority in them is to be suitably recognized.

His people also, were the farthest possible from wishing to withhold or to dispute the deference belonging to the ministerial office. Doubtless they were willing to yield more, even, than he demanded. They could see that he wished to assume no authority that did not grow out of the solemn relation of pastor and people, as instituted by the Great Head of the Church.

They saw that his noblest sympathies were with them, and that to promote their highest spiritual and eternal welfare was the object of his benevolent and unfaltering endeavors.

If his character in this respect, has been aspersed, it must have been by the instigation of the green-eyed monster, or from enmity to the cross. He was far enough from indulging a spirit of self-exaltation; of all men, he should be the last to be suspected of that.

Should it be inquired, "was there no offset to his rare excellencies of character, not publicly known?" we answer, that dwelling in a house of clay, akin to worms, ourselves of the same humble origin, we would not pronounce him immaculate. And yet it is easy to conceive that towards a man of his talents, and *young* and coming into a neighborhood of more elderly brethren and fathers in the ministry, there might have been awakened a spirit of jealousy, if nothing worse, in the bosoms of some. Yet if fame and popularity *would come, unsought*, how could he help *that*? and wherein was he to blame? If the ardent and consistent piety and zeal which he possessed, God had seen fit to employ to wake up the sleeping consciences of

the community around him, whether ministers or people, wherein was he to blame for *that*?

He rode, indeed, upon a high-wrought wave, a stormy sea, and danger was all around him; yet he weathered the blast which has proved so disastrous in many cases. His body frail, a shattered bark, yet his spirit remained unbroken; the ocean did not engulf it, nor was it wrecked by the roaring surge; his long-sought haven he beheld with transport, and entered it—no voyager more triumphantly.

Doubtless the path he struck out for himself, or rather which God had opened before him, on his entrance upon the ministry, might have been too brilliant or elevated for less ardent minds than Dr. Payson's, to have held or pursued; or for some cause, his manifested zeal might have occasioned doubt as to its utility, in the minds of those not of a kindred stamp with the *young minister*. Nor should we wonder if his zeal *provoked* very many, in a sense different from the Apostle's meaning. The wisdom of his course, in some respects, may have been disputed by less discerning or over-cautious minds, and his motives misconstrued and misunderstood, when a candid and sound judgment would have pronounced a very different verdict.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Would Dr. Payson have been a "reformer," as the term is identified with the present age?—Strictly conservative, yet not averse to modern improvements—The so-called "sixty-nine Society" in 1815—Peace Society—The first establishment of Sabbath Schools in Portland—He stood aloof from political struggles—Remarks of others on this subject—Letters from several individuals respecting Dr. Payson and his ministry—One from Dr. P. to the compiler.

Notwithstanding his great regard for the morals of the community, his strict conservatism would have forbidden him either to "hold or drive" in running the ploughshare over the well-fenced and cultivated fields, planted by the hands of our fathers.\*

He would have looked with a suspicious eye upon new organizations, whose object was to supplant or render obsolete others more ancient, especially if such innovations bore unfavorably upon the church. "Zion, the perfection of beauty" in God's account, was so in his. Yet it has been shown that when duty called he was not backward

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\*"We do not mean," says an American Reviewer, "to retard improvement: revolution must not be confounded with reform: nations, as well as individuals, have the right to remedy evils; yet there is great difficulty in fixing the barrier, in drawing the line, that divides the progress of good, and the commencement of its opposite; for where things are at the *mercy of men, and not of principles*, it is impossible to foresee how far they may be borne on, by the heady impetuosity of passion."



in all suitable ways, to lend his personal influence in suppressing immorality in all its forms.

From political contests, he stood aloof, from an intuitive moral delicacy, and religious principle. He viewed such an interference, as being entirely at variance with his profession.

Says an excellent writer, on this subject: "There is a sublime spirit in a devoted minister, which, as one says of Christianity itself, pays no more regard to these things, than to the battles of rooks, the industry of ants, or the policy of bees. The men of the world know when a minister is out of his place; when they can oppress him by numbers, or circumstances; when they can make him laugh, when his office frowns. It is one thing to be humble and condescending, another, to render yourself cheap and contemptible."

As a consistent christian minister, *he* would not thus let himself down. In common right with other citizens, Dr. P. doubtless cherished his own political views, yet neither policy or propriety, demanded a public avowal of them. We think he seldom, if ever, went to the polls; yet would it be a libel upon his character, to accuse him as deficient in the noblest patriotism, or a regard of the purest kind, for the happiness of his fellow men.

He was one of the number who assisted in organizing the "Peace Society" in Portland. We remember to have accompanied him to the meeting. On the way thither, we offered some remarks as to the expediency of such an institution. Said Dr. Payson, "we cannot foresee unto what this feeble beginning may grow."

We have not indeed, yet seen any very mighty results from the organization of Peace Societies, yet we know not how much influence they may have had in stilling the

warlike elements of man's natural character; or how much they are yet destined under Providence, to do. The "little leaven may yet leaven the whole lump." The high-minded originator, or at least, indefatigable promoter, of this noble enterprise, who devoted talent, and time, and wealth, and his life even, in advancing this object, so dear to his heart, (Capt. Ladd, of Maine,) sleeps in his peaceful grave, yet his noble achievements in the cause, can no more be lost, than they can be forgotten.

Dr. Payson was present, and officiated at the opening of the first sabbath school in Portland. His remarks on the occasion, were blessed to the awakening of a youth, who, in after life, when about to make a public profession of religion, twenty years afterwards, referred to this circumstance.

The first onset upon intemperance and kindred immoralities, made in Portland, and perhaps in Maine, was commenced by a phalanx of moral heroes, comprising many of the most respectable citizens, with whose names stands that of Edward Payson. Although at that time, such an undertaking was at the hazard of any man's popularity, yet these men rallied, and unflinchingly lifted high their standard, and did valiantly. This was doubtless, the beginning of an enterprise which in our land and in the world at large, ranks among the most efficient measures of moral reform. There was but little secrecy or bluster in their movements. The noise and tumult were all on the side of their opponents. These men and measures were then, and have since been misjudged and ridiculed, yet posterity well approve their doings. The names of those men, and their achievements, will be memorialized with increasing honor, as the cause they sought to promote becomes more and more appreciated,

and identified with the prosperity of our country, and the temporal salvation of the world.\*

Dr. P. noticed the irregularities in the community, and preached against out-breaking sins with sufficient point and frequency; exposing with masterly skill and unflinching boldness, the depravity of man's heart, as the *source of all wickedness*. His sermons speak loudly to this fact. In his preaching, he would "lay the axe to the root of the tree." A complaint being once made to him, that dancing had been introduced among his people, he replied, "if grace comes into the *heart*, it will keep the *heels* still." He choose rather to be like the physician who aims not to remove the coat from the fevered tongue of the patient, except by eradicating the disease which has

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\*This little germ was planted in 1816, at the Quaker meeting-house. Sixty nine names were pledged for its support. Hence its name. The prayers of as many hearts were offered for its prosperity on the spot. The shoot grew, and notwithstanding the adverse influences with which it was surrounded, bore fruit. It was, however, in the estimation of many, an unsightly tree. The eyes of many were averted from it. Malice, combined with self-interest, would have uprooted it. The popular storm would have destroyed it root and branch. Yet it withstood the fury of the blast. It still lives. The stock remains, substantially in those men of strong temperance principles who yet survive. Upon this stock, scion after scion has been grafted, from which fruit has been gathered. The fruit has been much improved through the zealous and indefatigable labors of one, who in dressing and pruning and defending it, has proved himself a most devoted friend to its prosperity. He has more recently furnished a scion, which has been rapid and healthy in its growth, bidding fair to over-top the surrounding branches. It has attracted the attention and secured the admiration of our own land and other lands. Seedlings from its fruit are now seen everywhere springing up. It is a hardy tree, bearing excellent fruit; pleasant to the taste of the unvitiated; conducive to health in a high degree; abounding with more than "twelve manner of virtues," which are for the healing of the nations." To drop the figure, the "*Maine Law*" is this "plant of renown;" its originator and propagator, Neal Dow, Esq. of Portland.

produced it, and who would have his pulse beat right by means adapted to allay the inward fever.

Dr. Chalmers recommends a course in accordance with the above views.

When he was about to leave his charge at Kilmarny for Glasgow, he made the following statement :

“ Here I cannot but record the effect of an actual, though undesigned experiment, which I prosecuted for the last twelve years among you. For the greater part of that time, I could expatiate on all those deformities of character which awaken the natural indignation of the human heart against the pests and the disturbers of human society. The interesting fact is, that during the whole of that period in which I made no attempt against the natural enmity of the mind to God, while I was inattentive to the way in which this enmity is dissolved, even by the free offer on the one hand, and the free acceptance on the other, of the gospel salvation, while Christ, through whose blood the sinner, who by nature stands afar off, is brought near to the Heavenly Lawgiver, whom he has offended, was scarcely ever spoken—even at this time, I certainly did press reformatations of every kind among my people. *But I never once heard of any such reformatations having been effected among them.* If there was any thing at all brought about in this way, it was more than ever I got any account of. I am not sensible that all the vehemence with which I urged the virtues and the proprieties of social life, had the weight of a feather on the moral habits of my parishioners. And it was not till I got impressed by the utter alienation of the heart in all its desires and affections from God—it was not till reconciliation to him became the distinct and prominent object of my ministerial exertions—it was not till I took the scrip-



tural way of laying the method of reconciliation before them—it was not till the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon their acceptance, and the Holy Spirit was set before them as the unceasing object of their dependence and their prayers, that I ever heard of any of those *subordinate reformati*ons, which I aforetime made the earnest, but I am afraid the ultimate object of my earlier ministrations. You have taught me that *to preach Christ is the only effective way of preaching morality in all its branches.*”

Yet, may we be permitted to remark that in the great work of the Temperance and other reforms, is it not a matter of surprise and of regret, that with all the commendable pains-taking to remove the deadly moral evils, viz: the slavery of alcohol, and of the servitude of the southern slave; that there has not been a deeper sympathy manifested for the *spiritual* bondage in which the soul is held by sin and Satan, which, if not removed, will have an issue more fearful than any temporal calamity. While the reformed inebriate boasts of one enemy slain, and one avenue closed, should he dream of safety, while there are other openings to the citadel of his vital peace, which unguarded, may admit the enemy in some other guise, which shall as fatally accomplish the ruin of his soul, as would that enemy over which many now so laudably triumph. Gladly as we exult in the halcyon days of those who have abandoned the death-cup forever, and sincerely as we would rejoice with the oppressed, could we see them prosperous and happy in their freedom, yet we respectfully suggest the above considerations as worthy of the notice of all true philanthropists.

Had the life of Payson been protracted through the

last twenty years of agitation and reform, we are of the opinion that he would not have deviated materially from the track he had commenced and so steadily pursued.

He would have been slow in adopting any course that would be hazardous to the blessings of established and successful experiment, by exchanging the principles of a true and tried philosophy, for the crude and problematical innovations, which have so frequently exploded in smoke or something worse.

Yet, nothing that suggested improvement would have been overlooked by him ; or when a verdict from any respectable source, had been rendered, favorable to proposed improvements, would he have wantonly disregarded it.

The introduction of controverted subjects, especially those having a political bearing, and having a tendency to produce "confusion and every evil work," in a religious society, he would have most conscientiously avoided.

He could not have jeopardized the "peace of Jerusalem" for any minor consideration. In the spirit of Nehemiah, he did always say, and we think he always would have said to all such projectors, "I am about a great work, I cannot come down; why should the work cease?" &c. He felt that ministers had before them one grand, specific object; a high and holy trust, never to be compromised at the solicitations of friend or foe.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

The following letters, relative to Dr. Payson, have come to hand, which we think will be read with interest :

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Writes the Hon. Judge P. to the compiler :—

“From Oct. 1818 to Oct. 1821, I resided in Portland, and attended on the religious services performed in the church of which Dr. Payson was pastor. During the same period, I was a frequent visitor at his house, and study. Such was the impression then made upon me, that his manner, and matter of preaching, are still fresh in my recollection, though more than thirty years have since elapsed.

In many respects he was a remarkable man. Rarely do we find talents, so various, yet powerful, so brilliant, yet solid, united with such humble christian zeal, as were exhibited by Dr. P. in his public services, and private intercourse. Beyond all men I have ever known, he had the power of arresting, and confining the attention of his hearers, and carrying away a whole congregation, by the force of his eloquence. He usually preached half the day, extempore, and his extempore sermons were the most effective ; but in his most fervid and glowing discourses, he never lost sight of his high responsibility to God, nor sought applause at the expense of truth. He never placed the Savior in the back ground ! The most humbling, and of course the most offensive doctrines of

the Gospel, were those which he most constantly presented to his hearers. In his private intercourse, I ever found Dr. Payson, cordial and affectionate. When I knew him, his constitution was feeble, and his physical power seemed inadequate to carry him through his daily labor, but when his mind became interested, he rose above bodily infirmity, and went nobly through tasks, that few could accomplish." J. P.

The following extract is from a letter received from one, who was once a member of Dr. Payson's church, and is now a respectable and useful minister in Maine.

"My last visit to Dr. Payson was but a few days before his death. Previous to that, a beloved friend had visited him, and spoke in almost raptures, of the happiness which Dr. P. appeared to feel. "Why," said she, "*he seemed like an angel.*" As I gazed upon him, I could not wonder at the expression. And I thought still more of it, and of him, as I took his hand in parting. "Give my love," he said, "to Mrs. S——, and tell her I am *ten times* happier than when she last saw me."

As I took my seat, he asked me about my state of mind. I told him I had not yet obtained relief. "Well," said he, "*don't give up, if you die in the struggle.*"

Mrs. Payson, who was standing at his bedside, stroking his forehead, remarked, "This is a crown worth striving for." "Yes, truly," thought I, *there is a Heaven, even here.*"

Of Dr. Payson's last days, it would be impossible to give an adequate description. How affecting the thought, that to the very last, he employed all his strength, to do what good he could! When he was unable to preach two sermons on the Sabbath, he would preach one; and when he could not do that, he would go



from his house, at the close of the afternoon sermon, and and make his way to the vestry, near the meeting house to conduct his Bible Class, the room crowded with eager hearers; all of whom felt, (as he once said,) that "at any hour, (such was the nature of his disease,) he might be taken from them." And when he could no longer conduct this exercise, how did he still strive to employ his little remaining strength, in his dwelling house! Who that attended, can forget, the private meetings, appointed for different classes, at his dying bed!

In that eventful closing period of his life, there was, pervading the community, a hallowed influence. The aspect and tone of society, had a visible impress, from the life and death of that holy man. How almost universal, and how frequent, were inquiries about him, throughout the town! How more than ordinarily sacred, seemed that house of worship, where he so long, and so faithfully had preached, and prayed! His spirit still seemed to linger there. And every voice of public prayer for him, seemed swelled by the united feelings of the whole congregation."

S. T.

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As to your purpose of giving the christian public some more specific views of that excellent man, Payson, I most heartily bid you "God speed," in the attempt; for I am persuaded, the great Head of the Church has never bestowed a richer gift, in the form of a pastor, even in any age of the world, than was Edward Payson. Few have walked so closely with God. I thought, while pursuing my theological studies under his instruction, and now, after more than 40 years have elapsed since I was licensed, I am even deeper in the conviction, that he walked more closely with God, than any other man with

whom I have been acquainted. I perfectly accord with a christian brother, who once sat under Payson's ministry, as it was your privilege, and mine, to do, that since the decease of that good man, there is less appearance of *spiritual, living christianity*, in that region, than while christianity was *seen* and *felt* in his life and ministry. I am persuaded, that the more Payson's character, views, and life are known, the higher will he stand, in the estimation of the wise and good; and the impression which was indelibly left on my mind, will, I am almost certain, be left on all who were intimately acquainted with him; that he was peculiarly in communion with the Father of spirits. And could I contribute my mite to make him more known to the *present generation*, and those who may come after, it would afford me high gratification. I should think myself well employed, in turning the attention of minds darkened by sin, to this honored *reflector* of the Sun of Righteousness. It is little however, that I can contribute at this period, for the accomplishment of so desirable an end.

I recollect a few of his sayings to myself, in personal conversation, which seem to show the man, especially on the subject of his confidence in prayer. While engaged in my theological studies, I was, on one occasion, *specially* depressed in spirit, in view of my almost entire want of qualifications for the great work of the gospel ministry; and I said to him, 'I may as well give up the hope of ever being useful in that holy office.' He promptly replied, "O *pray*, brother M., *pray*; I should hardly despair [of an *idiot* being useful in the ministry, if he would *only pray*." On another occasion he said, "If I certainly knew, that I needed two such *worlds* as this, for my own

private use, I should no more hesitate to ask for them, than I should hesitate to ask for my daily bread."

On the subject of preaching, he once said to me, "I wish in every sermon, to preach so much of the great plan of redeeming love, that if an individual hearer should enjoy no other means of instruction, he might not be lost through want of that instruction;" and you and I well remember, dear sir, how that good man delighted to dwell on the great plan of redeeming grace, where Christ is the Alpha and Omega; where His atonement by his death, and faith in his blood, stand out in bold relief.

I visited him five days before his upward flight. On that occasion he said, "I sicken at the thought of attempting to describe the glories of heaven. *Language breaks down under it.*" Instantly I thought of Paul's expression, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This eternal *weight* of glory, placed upon the crazy, feeble carriage of human language, crushes it to a wreck."

J. G. M.

The following letter was recently received by the compiler, and speaks for itself.

"Having been requested to furnish some particulars of the early part of Dr. Payson's ministry—especially as relating to the effect produced on my own mind, although nearly half a century has elapsed since he first came among us, and much is forgotten, yet I will endeavor to recall some things, which were then so deeply interesting to me. Previous to his coming to Portland, I had for some two or three years been in a dark and troubled state of mind. His preaching and remarks so suited my case, that they led me to conclude that he was providentially

sent to us for my special benefit, little suspecting at the time what an influence he was soon to exert upon almost the entire community. For a long time previous I had read much in Doddridge's "Rise and Progress." It was my constant companion, almost an oracle in my estimation. I was earnestly praying as directed by him (almost using his own words) for the pardon of sin, and to be made a subject of renewing grace. Even then, I thought myself a penitent, and often wondered why I obtained no relief, no hope of the pardon of sin. Time passed with little or no change in my feelings. Dr. Payson's first labors among us soon found me on the border of despair.

Many among us were anxiously inquiring "what must I do to be saved?" Meetings were appointed to converse with the newly awakened. I was present at these meetings, not as a professed *inquirer*, for in my early youth, I had been numbered with God's professing people, ignorant as I was of what was requisite for such a step. At these meetings, although not personally addressed, I was an attentive listener to all that was said. Here for the first time I learned where I was, and what had so long kept me in the dark. His close conversation and remarks to inquirers led me to conclude, that I had been wholly selfish in my prayers and desires to be a christian. Fears of the "wrath to come," had urged me on, in all myseeking. The desire to be *holy*, and the desire merely to be saved, were seen to be very different things, as explained to us by our pastor. From that time, I ceased to expect anything from my prayers and strivings. I was completely cut off from all hope, arising from any future doings of my own, and nothing now remained in myself,



to build upon. I felt I was at the mercy of a sovereign God, who could shew mercy for Christ's sake.

It was always Dr. P.'s aim in all his treatment of inquirers, to destroy their self-righteous hopes, to cut them off completely from all their own doings, and direct them to Jesus Christ, the only hope for the sinner. This view of things was new to me, and but for his close searching remarks and preaching, I might have been in the dark to this day. I can never forget how every word he spake, came home to me, (though not intended for me ;) how it seemed to meet my case, both when sifting the hopes of the mere professor, or leading the anxious soul to the only door of hope. How could we but value and love such a man, so ready to remove any difficulty which we ever after might meet with ! Whatever were our troubles, he understood us : we always repaired to him in our perplexities, and we never met a cold reception, but often left him with light hearts, or much encouraged to press on in the narrow path. His own deep experience pre-eminently qualified him to lead us out into the light. An invitation to meet our Pastor at a friend's house, was received by us with as much delight, as ever the gay votary of worldly pleasure anticipated, in mingling with the fashionable circle : we were not disappointed in our expectations. His time was too precious, and we had no desire for trifling conversation. Experimental, spiritual religion was discussed. We hung upon his lips, and drank in every word. O, such precious seasons !

Most of our little circle, with whom we then mingled, have gone to the spirit world, there to unite with him in more delightful companionship ; but some few remain who can never forget those scenes of deep and thrilling inter-

est. Surely it was not his fault that we were not better christians. Every thing was done on his part to instruct us: a high standard of piety he set up; but still he would never discourage any one who he thought was aiming to do right. Like his blessed Lord and Master, he would never "break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." Truly he excelled, in this respect, most others. How frequently soever we might intrude upon his time or patience, he never seemed weary, or sent us away coldly; but always aimed to help and comfort us.

The following is saved from a letter, Dr. P. wrote to the compiler, by way of apology for not attending his ordination at Boothbay, June 10th, 1817.

It evinces his anxiety to be present on the occasion, and his spirit of perseverance in accomplishing his object, although in this case unsuccessful. Speaking of the disappointment it had occasioned us, he says: "It will not, I am confident, give you half the pain it has given me. But it did not appear to be the will of Providence, that I should be present. We had prepared every thing for setting out on Monday morning, but the violence of the storm, and the unusually feeble state of my health, rendered it impossible. Presuming it would be fair on Tuesday, we concluded to set out in the morning, and reach B. (about fifty-five miles) at farthest, time enough to attend the public services. Tuesday morning, it still rained violently, but as there were some appearances of fair weather, we set out. We soon discovered, however, that our horse was lame, and his lameness increased so fast that we were obliged to return.

But as there was still some prospect of getting there in

season, we thought of going by water. But after visiting every wharf in town, we found nothing could be procured but an open boat; and we were told by Capt. B. (a member of his church,) it would not be safe to venture in it.

We offered one man twenty dollars to carry us down in a little sloop, but he was otherwise engaged; so at last we were obliged to give it up. It is doubtless all for the best, though we cannot see how.

I will mention the text I intended to preach from, as it may suggest to you some profitable reflections. "And the disciples returned to Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught."

If you are enabled to tell Him, every night what you,

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We regret the loss of the concluding part of his interesting remark. But we see the "ruling passion strong," in life, as in death. At that time, ordinations were of more rare occurrence than now, and as the candidate for ordination was one of his own flock; and there having been also a recent extensive revival of religion in the place, we can understand his desire to fulfil the appointment and to gratify our wishes, and the reason of his taking so much pains to be present.\*

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\*Rev. J. W. Ellingwood, of Bath, being present on the occasion, preached in Dr. Payson's stead.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Concluding Reflections upon [his general character — His dying hours — Remarks on the intimate connection between the life and the death of individuals — Dying in character—The dying hour the index of the life — An affectionate and respectful consideration of the question, “What effect ought the twenty years of such faithful preaching as Dr. Payson’s to have had upon his hearers?” — Dr. Payson’s remarkably triumphant death only what was to have been anticipated — Some remarks of the biographer of Rev. Mr. Cecil touching this subject — Lines written at the tomb of Payson, by Wm. B. Tappan.

### CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

We find ourselves leaving that part of Dr. Payson’s history to which we had intended, principally, to confine our reminiscences. Some concluding reflections, however, may be very properly introduced, suggested by his particular case, in evidence of the intimate connection which God has established between the closing period of one’s life, and that life itself.

That Dr. Payson’s piety was of no common character, but of an elevated and peculiar stamp, is seen in every page of his Biography. It falls not within the scope of the compiler’s plan to repeat the “dying thoughts” which the author of the “Memoir,” has so largely supplied for the edification of millions. We would merely allude to them, as corroborating the general truth already suggested



We are instructed to "*mark* the perfect man, and to behold the upright, for the *end* of that man is peace ;"—and usually it is a peace and joy, adjusted to the tenor of his life.

Who was not prepared to expect that a life of untiring zeal and self-denial, like that of Payson's, would close just as it did. Is not such an issue agreeable to God's appointment, and to all analogy in things natural and spiritual? Is it not written, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap?" Was it not thus with the martyrs, and with our missionaries on heathen ground? A life, eminently devoted to Christ and his cause, comes not to a doubtful or inglorious end. "Them that honor me, I will honor." When the *beginning* is Christ, the *end* is Christ. Faith and holiness shall receive their everlasting reward. "The water that I shall give him," said Christ, "*shall be in him*, a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life."

Yet a hope and a triumph like that of Paul's, or Stephen's or Payson's, cannot be expected by the spiritual dwarf or drone. Just a "name to live," entitles to no martyr's dying triumph. To be saved even "so as *by fire*," is a mercy indeed, yet we ought to desire and expect more. The "abundant entrance," the triumph of holy faith; although not always bestowed upon the dying believer in the same degree, in all cases, yet it usually follows the faithful life.

Few are called to pass through such scenes of darkness as did Payson. His course, from the beginning, was peculiar. The type it originally assumed, only became deeper and stronger as his religious history unfolds.

There was less of conflict towards its closing period, yet he became stronger in his exultation of victory.

When we say that his religion was of a noble and lofty character, it is not to be understood that it partook of that spirit which says, "stand by thyself, I am holier than thou." Rather was it in perfect contrast to such emotions of pride and self-righteousness.

There was no common-place about his religion—nothing superficial; it was all of a piece, and all a deep realization. Every other object was eclipsed by having this one grand object prominently fixed in his eye. In executing his great commission on earth, nothing effectually obstructed his course. "His work was before him." In this world, more an exile than at home, he passed on to the upper kingdom of his Father.

He turned not aside, though his path was beset with lions; nor for the mountain barrier, for he excavated its sides, or scaled its summit. The dark ravine intimidated him not, for faith bridged its frightful chasm. Jehovah's "pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night," were his guide. "One star alone, the star of Bethlehem," had fixed his eye. His grand end and aim, the glory of God, and held in indissoluble connection with his own everlasting interests.

His experience, as is evident, partook more of the tempest than the calm. It was high winds, either ahead or fair. Although it was an experience of dreadful conflict with spiritual foes, yet it told of rich spoils, gathered upon the battle-field, from which he carried his scars; and they, even, afforded him joy during those intervals of rest, (as to the weary soldier,) when he might contem-

plate the power and grace of the great Captain of his salvation, which had sustained him in the conflict, and encouraged him to press on with vigor, to the end of his course ; the whole affording an example of suffering and triumph for the instruction of coming generations.

“ True to its destined port, through storm and shine,  
Though sails be rent, and waves in fury rise,  
Its beacon light, a burning hope divine,  
Forever bright, though tempests sweep the skies.”

And are we to expect that a passage so strongly characterized as his, would have only an ordinary termination ? We might be sure that a “ sea of glory,” would be spread out before such a dying christian ; that the “ land of Beulah” would appear in distinct and joyful vision. As much of heaven was let into his soul at the finishing of his course, as mortality could endure. Then was the winding up of the drama of life ; a life of extraordinary piety and suffering. Let us “ mark the perfect man,” for *God* had marked him — in life for the arrow, in death for the triumph — in glory for the crown.

How wonderfully does God make it appear, that when such a man as Payson comes to die, he shall not have to “ lean upon a broken reed, or a spear.”

Says an eminently godly minister, “ If fools will come and ask us what there is in the spirit of religion, we should show, that if it can do nothing else, it can bear up the dying sinner ; that he has got hold of something abiding and substantial, when everything else flees from him.”

We would offer, in this connection, a few examples, by way of illustrating the truth, not only that the “ ruling

passion is strong in death," but to show how unenviable is such a development of character as is witnessed in most of the great and renowned among men in their dying moments. Men die in character — they would die so. In one class, however, we see, the dying hour savors of earth, in the other, of heaven. The history of men's lives usually retains its coloring to its extremest verge, and is often seen with more distinctness at its closing period. Those who have been chiefly eminent for worldly wisdom, as well as those who have been distinguished for their piety, have generally exhibited their true character in the honest hour of death. Death sets the seal, and stamps the character ; and the impression is but the complexion of the life deepened and fixed.

In adverting to examples of illustrious men, whether of ancient or modern times, in the remarks which follow, we mean nothing insidious or disrespectful to their memory. We only state facts, and use them for the purpose of illustration.

A religion, a little removed from ordinary morality, yet recognizing the truth of Christianity, was seen in Addison. He sent to his young infidel friend, saying, " Come see how a *Christian* can die." His life, supremely devoted to literature, moral essays, and politics, the stream only maintained its level at death : the end was of no higher elevation than its commencement, or during its general course. There could be but a doubtful evidence, certainly, that his hope was of a genuine, evangelical stamp ; useful as his writings are, and amiable as his life appeared.

We are not eager, if we were competent, to pronounce



upon the christian character of Dr. Samuel Johnson, whose literary labors have done honor to his name and to his race. We would not detract an iota from the acknowledged fame of this giant in philology and morals, yet it is but too evident that the special interests of the soul and of eternity were obscured and too often forgotten amid his close and unremitting literary labors. And as death is the hour that reveals the secrets of the heart and life, we see the fact exemplified in the trying scene of his last moments.

Whatever might have been his religious creed, or his outward observance of it, in his dying moments, there was something essential to his peace, that he had too much overlooked, and which he could not find in the book of human knowledge, nor in the great volume of his own heart and life—a spiritual view of the Savior. We are informed that in his last sickness, he sent to a humble minister of Jesus, who lived at a distance, to come and see him, and explain to him “the way of life and salvation more perfectly,” than he yet had knowledge of.

He was afraid to die; to die with all this uncertainty that now shrouded his path to immortality.

The man of God did not come, although the request was repeated; yet he sent a message to the great, the dying man, containing scriptural and evangelical directions, sufficiently definite to teach him the manner in which a sinner “can be just with God.”

The directions having been communicated to him, the great English moralist inquired, “Did he say so? did he say so?” apparently just waking up to the truth and solemnity of these grand and peculiar doctrines of the Gospel;

as if he had all his lifetime, been ignorant of a heart-affecting sense of the need of Christ as a Savior. That he possessed a speculative knowledge of these truths is evident from his biography. What the result of his quickened sensibilities was, at that late hour, we are not able to say, but it is sufficient to our purpose, to state that his dying circumstances accorded with the general tenor of his life. Eternity was flashing into his soul most unwelcome forebodings, and whatever the final result, doubtless he came down to the very verge of the grave, "encompassed with sparks of his own kindling," dressed and laurelled for immortality, and with the same drapery of honors, as he had folded so fondly around him in the days of his prosperity and his fame. In his 75th year, the last of his life, the "ruling passion" was as strong as ever. The highest literary honors which he enjoyed, were insufficient to afford consolation to a soul departing, and soon to be called to give account of his stewardship. "Verily, such have their reward," He would die in character, as a great man, though stripped of all by the hand of unrelenting death.

However renowned the man, or however arrayed in moral sublimity, the closing scene of the great British Admiral, as he lay expiring in the arms of his officers, at the closing period of a most splendid victory, yet the dying words of Nelson, "England expects every man to do his duty," showed where the heart of Nelson was. Words of devoted patriotism, and worthy to be set in gold upon the breastplate of every loyal Briton. Yet we see only the ruling passion, in full and perfect development. He had no time or disposition in that fearful moment, to pre-

pare for a conflict with a mightier and more deadly foe, or so alive was he to his country's expectations, and the duties of his brave men, as to be indifferent to the question, to him, immensely more important. If *England's king* expects every man to do his duty, what duty does *God* expect of *me*? and is this dying scene to close with that great duty unperformed!

He finished his illustrious career, in exact accordance with his wishes; the peal of cannon his summons to the high tribunal; and the joy of expected victory the consolation of his death hour. He died in character.

Had the conscience of John Randolph been sleeping on "rose and myrtle," for three-score years, even until the signal of death speaks in his wakened ear? Had the realities of a retributive eternity been hidden from his eyes, till compelled to exclaim, "*Remorse*," what is the signification of *Remorse*? bring me the dictionary." We say not of him, that it was not an awakening, though late, yet favorable to after thoughts of penitence, of prayer, and of hope; but are not such closing scenes, and those of multitudes, only a faithful mirror of the past, which are often seen reflected upon many a last leaf of man's doubtful, and painful history!

Nor are there wanting instances of individuals, who, during their lingering sickness, have earnestly expressed their desire to die in character with their profession, and who appeared unsubmissive to the manner in which "the grand enemy was approaching them. Wasting away under the ravages of consumption, he inquires, "why could I not die in my country's service, and fall a martyr in its cause, instead of dying thus ingloriously." We allude to

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one who stood among the brightest in the annals of American history. "They say they are gods, but they shall die like men."

The love of human glory dominant in man's depraved heart, both in early and mature life, and which fashions all the grand outlines, and governs the movements of his history, loses not its peculiar complexion, to the last, as he lives, so generally he dies. The world his idol, he hugs to his dying bosom. His bags of gold, and his deeds and bonds, he would have spread out before him, as he rests his head upon his dying pillow, that he may take one more look, at what is perhaps, his only treasure. The sordid avaricious man dies in character.

The requiem over the brave soldier is sung in martial melody, and they wrap his honored corse in the nation's flag, to which he has died a martyr. They lay him in his grave, "alone in his glory," while, often his expectations of the future, were scarcely more than the *poetry* of hope; all partaking only of the grand illusion of a military pageant. But still, it is all in character!

Such was not that "sea of glory," that was spread out before the dying Payson, or the consistent, dying christian, wherever found. Jesus only can make soft the dying bed. Such sing their own requiem, as earth is vanishing, and Heaven opens, in the language of the immortal poet;

"Jesus, the vision of thy face  
Hath overpowering charms,  
Scarce shall I feel death's cold embrace  
If Christ be in my arms.



"Then while you hear my heart strings break,  
How sweet my minutes roll;  
A mortal paleness on my cheek,  
And glory in my soul."

The dying hour in most cases, is seen to be the index of the past life. How painfully true it tells the story of man's delinquency. Its finger points upbraidingly to the retrospect, and portentously to the future; while on the vision of the saint, is seen the angel of the covenant, beckoning to brighter worlds.

Although it is said that dying grace shall be afforded for a dying hour, which is doubtless in a measure true, yet christians even, depart with a greater or less degree of triumph, as their lives have been consistent, or otherwise; and of most believers, in a qualified sense it may be said, "O that thou hadst hearkened unto my commandments, then had thy peace been like a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." The character of the life will impart a color and complexion to the closing scene.

The duelist, the philosopher, the infidel, would all die *in character*. So would the christian hero. So die the former; so dies the latter; at his side the great captain of his salvation, "Death of death, and hell's destruction." A sinner by nature, ruined by transgression, saved by grace; this, his humble boast in life; at death the same. He dies in character.

Nor should such eminent examples in the christian ministry, as Dr. Payson affords, be overlooked or forgotten. What would this dark world have been without those burning and shining lights, as Luther, and Calvin, and Knox? The world does not forget them; their

memory is still precious, although they have long since passed away. Whitefield was the theme of remark among all classes, in his day; nor is he yet forgotten; probably never will be while the world stands. The name, as well as "the good of such men, lives after them."

It would have been an anomaly indeed, in the moral world, if Dr. Payson had not died in the triumphant manner he did. We looked that his last hours would be peace — and more. How honorable to the grace and promise of God; how blessed for him, and for us, and for religion, and for the world, that such hours they were.

The following remarks of Mr. Cecil's biographer, so relevant to our present subject, and which so graphically present the dying scene of one who resembled Dr. Payson in many respects, we take the liberty to insert. "The energy, decision, and grandeur of his natural powers, gradually gave way, and a morbid feebleness succeeded; yet in this afflicted state of his body, on one side almost lifeless, his organ of speech impaired, and his judgment weakened, *the spiritual dispositions of his heart, displayed themselves in a most remarkable manner.* He appeared great in the ruins of nature, and his eminently religious character manifested itself, to the honor of divine grace, in a manner that surprised all. *If his habits had been ambitious, or sensual, or covetous, or worldly, these tendencies, if any, would have displayed themselves; but as his soul had long been established in grace, and spiritual religion had been incorporated with all his trains of sentiment and affection, and had become like a second nature, the holy dispositions of his heart acted with remarkable constancy, through all the variations of his illness.*

Throughout his illness, his whole mind, instead of being fixed on some mean and insignificant concern, was riveted on spiritual objects. Every other topic was so uninteresting to him, and even burdensome, that he could with reluctance allow it to be introduced. His view of his own misery and helplessness as a sinner, and the necessity of being entirely dependent on divine grace, and being saved as the greatest monument of its efficacy, was continually on the increase. As he drew near his end, his one topic was Jesus Christ. Just before his dissolution, he said to a friend, "I know myself to be a wretched, worthless sinner, (the seriousness and feeling with which he spoke I shall never forget,) having nothing in myself but poverty and sin. I know Jesus Christ to be an almighty, and glorious Savior. I see the full efficacy of his atonement and grace, and I cast myself entirely on them, and wait at His footstool."

How profitable to contemplate the lives and deaths of such men as Cecil and Payson; that amidst the corruption and apostacy with which the world abounds, they exemplified in their lives, a genuine religion; and who have gone up to shine as the stars in the upper firmament. And comes there not a voice from that world of light, saying, "*Whose faith follow;*" catch their falling mantles, ye sons of the priesthood; and who cannot but pray, that for every ascending Elijah, succeeding prophets may be found, well furnished to lead the "sacramental host of God's elect."

In closing our reflections, it would be a very natural, and we are sure a very affectionate and respectful inquiry to make, "What effect ought twenty years of Payson's

faithful labors to have had upon a people who enjoyed so great a privilege. We are sure it was no ordinary privilege. So acknowledged by themselves, perhaps with satisfaction and complacency, while he ministered to them, and with similar feelings it may be now, while in memory they revert to the days of his ministry.

We might hope that the truth of God's word, gathered therefrom with no unskillful hand, and poured forth in burning eloquence, for more than a thousand sabbaths, with concentrated power, could not fail to reach the conscience, and melt the heart of stone. Accompanied by the Eternal Spirit, it did: in how many instances it did; yet alas! in how many instances it did not. The image, the voice, the affectionate appeals of their Pastor, they have not forgotten. Will they ever? and we will indulge such a hope while calling to mind the instance of the hundred-year-old sinner, before alluded to, whose mind had retained, as in fallow ground, the precious seed during nearly a century of God's patience, which "after so long a time" became fruitful and bore the fruits of repentance. Such a miracle of grace is registered, to prevent entire despair; yet recorded, alas, are many examples of grace abused, till the mercy-time of God has passed away forever.

Dr. Payson came to his grave at the comparatively early age of forty-five years. His life, during his ministry, as is well known, was one of protracted disease, and often of acute bodily suffering; in the latter part of it, especially, his disease seldom intermitted, but increased in violence till it terminated in death. From his own description of his physical sufferings during his last days, they



must have been intense, surpassing conception. Yet, by an almost supernatural strength, derived from an exalted faith in his Savior, with its accompanying supports and consolations, and joyous anticipations, he was lifted above his disease, and was enabled to converse to the admiration and profit of those who attended at his bed-side, with a solemnity and vigor and energy that seemed to be borrowed from a view of eternal objects, seen face to face.

We deem it unnecessary to extend our remarks upon the interesting and affecting scenes of his last sickness, and death; a full account of them having been already published in the "Memoir" by Dr. Cummings, and subsequently by the Am. Tract Society, in a condensed form. The more those dying sayings of Payson are read, the more impressive do they appear, and the stronger is the conviction that in death, at least, no one has ever preached like him; with equal power, pathos and effect. We deem it an honor and a privilege to point our readers anew to that monument in memory of Payson which his Biographer has reared. His Savior's example how faithfully he copied. How fair the page which contains his life's history. How he himself, read that page, we well know; but as far as man's vision can discern, we see the fair transcript only to admire. Suffering, dying, triumphant Pastor! how safe, now where

"Sin casts no shadow,  
Sorrow hath no name."



## A P P E N D I X .

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In the war of the Revolution, a large part of Portland (then Falmouth) was reduced to ashes by the perfidious Mowatt, from on board a British vessel of war, lying off the harbor. Great Britain and the United States now sustain very different relations towards each other. Portland, some old inhabitant that walks its streets, and who witnessed its smouldering ruins, will tell you, very significantly, has under gone a mighty change since that time. She now assumes the appearance of one of the most beautiful cities of our land.

The two great nations have been drawn up in battle array, once, since that tug of the revolution ; for the last time, we predict. That we prove to be a true prophet, pray ye all.

From the heights of Portland may there never again be viewed the unnatural struggle of mother and daughter. May no deadly conflict of these nations again en-crimson the ocean which rolls between them.

The daughter now matronly and dignified, may sit down together with the mother in happy companionship, and forget their old family contentions, never to be repeated.

Modern inventions and commercial enterprise have united the interests of the two nations in strong bonds ;

and such reciprocities have been established as shall, we trust, never be compromitted.

But for Portland in 1855, what shall we say ? "Beautiful for situation," with a population of twenty-five thousand, with its forest-shaded streets for ornament and comfort ; its princely dwellings and its "merchant princes ;" its vast commercial advantages ; its railroad termini, soon to become an important depot for our own and foreign nations ; above all, a city abounding in temples of the Most High, and facilities for the liberal education of the young.

Already has the prophecy, long since made, of its destined prosperity, been fulfilled in part. The present auspicious era of her history, foretels for the no distant future, a full accomplishment of the prophetic vision.

The tramp and the snorting of the iron steed are revealing the story, as they are heard through the length and breadth of our State, as they send forward the ponderous cars, freighted with the commodities of all nations, and alive with merchandize more precious than gold.

But we are away from our subject. We would speak of Portland principally, because of interesting relations to the scenes and subjects recorded in the present work.

Here transpired the principal acts, in the grand drama of Payson's life. He walked those streets. He moulded and influenced the morals of the people. Many of their sons and daughters he baptised in their youth. His fervent prayers were here offered in their behalf, the blessings of which they may now be reaping. For twenty years he proclaimed God's truth, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, until at length, exhausted under the weight of his labors, he sank into the arms of death. His ashes are deposited among their family



graves. His memory is yet fragrant as the spicy breeze, is at once "pleasant and mournful to the soul."

To the stranger, the pious stranger at least, these associations of which we speak, will be among the strongest attractions of his visit to this place. He inquires of you for the house where Payson met his flock on the Sabbath; for the favored room where Pastor and people held those precious seasons for fasting, conference and prayer; for the last dwelling he occupied while on earth and from which his remains were carried to his last resting place; for the monument which marks the place of his burial, and for the remnant of his flock, that they may learn from them more of the man, whose piety and zeal and talents have shone forth with a world-wide celebrity, and which have stamped upon the place of his sepulture the seal of immortality.

Where sleeps, (the far-off stranger asks,) your Pastor's mold'ring clay?

Bends o'er his urn, the stranger-friend; and breathes the plaintive lay.

Point us the pathway to the church, his foot-steps oft have trod,  
Let us behold where gathered hearts bowed to that man of God;  
Tell us the secret of that pow'r when souls were captive led;  
Say what the thunder of that hour, when prostrate sinners bled,  
And when upon the altar plac'd, the incense and the pray'r  
Was it some saint, or angel form, that wak'd devotion there?

How are our emotions enkindled afresh, when viewing some particular object that reminds us of a departed friend; his portrait; a keepsake; a memento; and the room which that friend once occupied; if a minister, the pulpit in which he once stood. Standing at Payson's tomb, a thousand tender recollections arise. There is another spot of sacred associations. We refer to the house

in which he dwelt soon after he commenced his labors in Portland. There is the chamber. We recently visited it. It was to us an interesting spot. One could not look into it but with emotions of thrilling interest. There Payson agonized in prayer for himself and people. There he composed those sermons which wrought like magic upon his congregation. That room is now just as Payson left it, forty years ago. There, on Wilmot street, stands the house ; unscathed by lightning ; untouched by the incendiary ; not metamorphosed by the cunning hand of modern architecture. Owned and occupied still, by the same man ; the venerable merchant, now " full eighty and stirring," and his amiable consort and family, who took the stranger in, pleased to minister to the wants of the man of God, and who received in return the privilege of bowing with him in prayers around the family altar. It is the prophet's chamber ; and while entering it you seem to meet his image, and almost to hear him speak. You turn away, lost in solemn reverie. The echo of his words, and the recollections of departed years and scenes, in melancholy, yet precious remembrance, come with a strong rush across your musing and meditative spirit. But you awake in a moment to more substantial realities — his eminent services in the cause of Christ ; his triumphant death, and the better house he now occupies, " not built with hands, eternal in the heavens."

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When Drs. Reed and Matheson, the delegation from the Congregational churches of England and Wales, visited the United States, some fifteen years since, although the New World abounded with objects, both natural and moral, more attractive to our transatlantic brethren, we doubt whether they approached or viewed any spot with a

deeper interest than the scene of Payson's labors and triumphs.

At their home firesides, they had read of the man and learned much of his character ; they would now realize as much as possible from actual observation and inquiry, while standing upon the ground where he had stood, some of those scenes and events which the pen of the biographer had recorded.

They repair to the residence of his bereaved and beloved family, to mingle their prayers and their sympathies with them. They approach with sacred emotions, the edifice where the voice of the man of God had sounded in thrilling eloquence for twenty years. They ascend its pulpit ; they stand up and survey its walls and essay to catch the inspiration of his devotions, once kindled upon that very altar ; that in imagination, at least, they might hear those tones which once fell from his lips.

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At a meeting of the Am. Board in Portland, in 1851, which drew together such an immense concourse of strangers, what spot was so attractive to many present, as the tomb of Payson ?

A clergyman who came from a considerable distance to attend the meeting, remarked that one great object he had in view in being present, was, that he might behold the place of Payson's life and labors.

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When the edifice of the second parish in Portland, (late Dr. Payson's,) underwent the last remodelling in 1843, it was judged expedient by the Committee to remove the pulpit in order to substitute one of a more modern style.

We are not to suppose that this movement, although

suggested and approved by Dr. Payson's personal friends, implied any want of respect or affection on their part, towards their beloved pastor, yet doubtless with some misgivings, they bore from its ancient place the sacred relic. They conveyed it to the vestry of the church, there to remain, we think, for many years, kindred in sacredness to the "ark of the ancient covenant, that contained Aaron's rod that budded, and the pot of manna," not only as an object of curiosity and attraction to strangers, but to stand as a pastor's memorial to his surviving friends, and their descendants to many generations.

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It was a natural and very commendable expression of genuine affection in Dr. Judson's friends, who accompanied him to the ship in which he was about to embark for the Isle of Bourbon, for the restoration of his health, when they found that his disease had made such an advance that he would probably die on ship-board, and be buried in the ocean, they entreated that he might be taken back to Maulmain, saying, "we want his grave where we can look upon it."

Not only would thousands in Burmah have accounted this a precious privilege, but christian pilgrims from every land would have sought for his sepulchre, that they might do honor to the memory of one so deservedly esteemed. But this privilege God did not grant them. With other beloved missionaries of the cross,\* he found

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\*Rev. Mr. Wheelock, Baptist missionary to Burmah, who was drowned on his outward passage.

Rev. Robert Wyman, of Cumberland, Me., of the Ceylon Mission, who was returning on account of his health, and died on the passage, three weeks out from Madras.



his grave far down the dark and fathomless sea, where no eye save that of the Omniscient can penetrate.

It is for the consolation of Dr. Payson's friends, now living, and of unborn generations, perhaps, that the place of his burial may be looked upon ; that it may be said of him as of the patriarch David, " his sepulchre is with us to this day."

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### THE GRAVE OF PAYSON.

BY W. B. TAPPAN.

" I stood in silence and alone,  
Just at the Sabbath dawn of day,  
Where quietly the modest stone,  
Told me that Payson's relics lay.  
No gorgeous tale, nor herald's arms,  
Astonished with their splendid lie ;  
Or hireling praise ;—in truth's meek charms.  
It said : 'His record is on high.'

I gazed around the burial spot,  
That looks on Portland's spires below ;  
And on her thousands, who are not,  
Did sad, yet useful thought bestow.  
Here sleep they, till the trumpet's tongue,  
Shall peal along a blazing sky ;—  
Yet who of these—the old and young,  
May read his record *then* on high ?

And near, I saw the early grave  
Of him who fought at Tripoli ;  
Who would not live the Moslem's slave ;  
Who fell, a martyr with the free.  
And wrapt in Freedom's starry flag,  
The chief who dared to " do or die ;"  
And England's son, who could not lag,  
Whose deeds his country wrote on high.\*

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\*Allusion is probably here made by the poet to the graves of Com

I turned again to Payson's clay,  
 And recollected well how bright  
 The radiance ; far outshining day,  
 That rob'd his soaring soul      ight.  
 What music stole awhile from heaven,  
 To charm away his parting sigh ;  
 What wings to waft him home were given,  
 Whose holy "record was on high."

And give me — trembling said I then,  
 Some place, my Savior, where *such* dwell ;  
 And far above the pride of man,  
 And pomp of which the worldly tell,  
 Will be my lot. Come haughty kings !  
 And ye who pass in glitter by,  
 And feel that ye are abject things,  
 Whose *record is not found on high* !"

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modore Edward Preble of Portland, and to Captains Blythe and Burroughs, (of the brigs Enterprise and Boxer,) both of whom fell in the engagement off Portland, in the War of 1812. A reference to the funeral of the two commanders may be found in the former part of this work.

THE END.









Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: April 2006

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